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# SOF

## C O N T E N T S

SEPTEMBER 1999

Vol. 24 No. 9

A British Special Forces troop, along with his Western and Eastern counterparts, digs in for the duration against international terrorists. Story on page



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SOF Staff

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courtesy LTR

# COMMAND GUIDANCE

by Robert K. Brown

## Ahead To The Past

This year's SOF Las Vegas Convention/EXPO will mark the 20th annual gathering of *Soldier Of Fortune* magazine's readership. Since 1980, from the humble and uncertain beginnings of our initial Convention/EXPO in Columbia, Mo., our yearly pilgrimage has expanded, both in numbers of Conventioneers, general attendees and distributors and vendors.

Our 22-26 September 1999 show will be a blockbuster: The Palace Station Hotel (our Convention headquarters) and Cashman Field (our EXPO hall) are top-of-the-line facilities without nose-in-the-air attitudes. In the recent past, we've run into parking problems and occasional less-than-primo service at our hotels. This year, that will change.

Our 20th annual Convention/EXPO is going to be something special — with an abundance of unique exhibitors, activities and faces. We're even going to have a conventioneers-only AK/AR15 live-fire match, and later, a beer-blowout retirement party for Colonel Alex McColl, SOF's departing Director of Special Projects.

And how about a mock trial of Clinton for his gutting of the military and his Chinese espionage connections? We'd like to hear suggestions from you as to how to execute the concept.

Our group is one-of-a-kind, born (if you will) from post-Vietnam and post-Carter disenchantment. We share a strong bond, all of us — military, civilian, shooters, non-shooters, the politically active and the politically novice. And guess what? The cycle has come full-circle. Again, we are marked as the castoffs, and the unwanted radicals; gun-toting dangers to a society whose balls have shrunk to microscopic dimensions.

Again, we share a common enemy: the

Clinton Administration's expansion of oppression and concurrent reduction of freedoms.

This wretched traitorous president and his liberal coterie and supporters, a shlocked-together soup of Nam-era draft-dodgers, present-day high-tech greedmongers who'd sell their own daughters to the People's Republic of China if the price were right, and liberal Hollywood gutter rats who have gone on from their demeaning portrayals of Vietnam veterans and other patriotic Americans to their current whimpering and snarling demands for Americans to stuff the Second Amendment in favor of some sweet-frosted utopia where "We don't have any liberties — but, damn it, at least our kids are safe!"



The past has become the very unstable present. In 1980 Missouri we were termed "paranoids" for worrying about our Second Amendment and other rights. We were concerned about a future president (who turned out to be Carter) who would quit being an American and serve as Pimp-In-Chief for anti-sovereignty multinationals and shadowy-fringe foreign and domestic vipers who saw profits in protracted no-win wars, too far from our shores to be of danger.

While Clinton's hordes steamroll over the Constitution I, frankly, am quite concerned whether next year we'll even be legally permitted to hold our Convention. I realize that sounds alarmist — but do you trust Clinton to back-off and to not pursue his anti-gun rights/anti-human rights agenda? I don't! This rat and his sharks smell blood, and they're not going to loosen their grip.

It's prime time for us to reunite and solidify our obligation and mission to defend this country from enemies, both foreign and domestic.

Our future is now. See you in Vegas! ☒

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## Even the Score

### GET EVEN

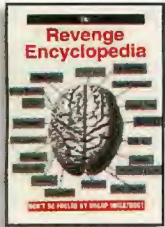
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Foreword by Robert K. Brown

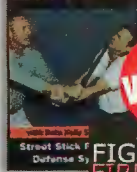


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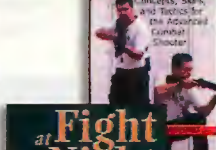


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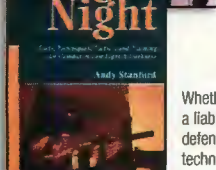
VIDEOS

### ADVANCED FIGHTING WITH FIREARMS

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with Andy Stanford



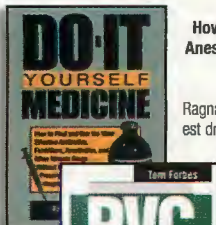
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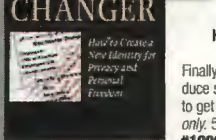
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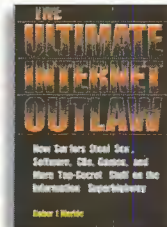


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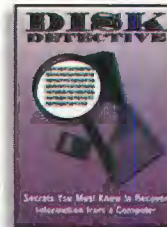
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## Local Issues

In all the screaming and crying in the wake of the Columbine shootings, the question that needs to be asked is why the Federal Government, namely the liberal gun grabbers in the Senate and House, feel that these essentially local issues need new federal laws to solve the problem.

In the Constitution, crimes were broken down into Local, State and Federal jurisdiction to prevent the "enforcement" arm of any level of government from becoming too powerful.

In spite of this fact, Congress has usurped and federalized local laws at every opportunity, under the Interstate Commerce Act, knowing full well they will need to be investigated and prosecuted by Federal law enforcement at great expense. With the power and money of the Federal Government behind them, the temptation and opportunity to abuse that power by the Federal police will become a real threat to our freedom and rights.

How soon we forget the tragedies at Ruby Ridge and Waco!

The way things are going, there will be no need for local law enforcement because when every crime from shoplifting to murder will be covered by federal law, local police will be redundant.

What is evolving is a new Federal Central Directorate of Law Enforcement with no loyalty or accountability to the people, only to the leadership of whatever regime is in power!

It will be an American version of the SS or the KGB! Is that what we really want or need? Has history taught us nothing?

Michael A. Pacer  
Glendora, Calif.



## Milosevic's Fan

You have completely outdone yourself. Your Milosevic target was in very bad taste. Milosevic is a hero for standing up to the NWO and your rehashing of government propaganda is evidently sad. Any shred of credibility your magazine had was lost in the mid '80s. Your continued worship of the NWO and their ZOG has exposed you as the un-American, pro-tyranny rag mag you have become. You are a disgrace to all freedom-loving people

and you have become traitors to the American ideals our forefathers died for. No wonder you are referred to as YAHOOOS by all Americans who know you for the government lackey trash mag you are. I will never again read your trash and have begun a campaign on the internet to expose you for the government propaganda apparatus that you are. You are a disgrace.

*The Soldier Of Fortune magazine conspiracy meeting with high-ranking government officials, to accomplish world tyranny, will begin at 2000 hrs. Wednesday at the Elks Lodge.*



## Weekend Warriors

I was on your website and saw the page about the Legion and building it. I agree with my whole heart. I am in the Oklahoma National Guard, joined May of '98, and from what I've seen and heard, at my unit and at Fort Sill, the military is low on recruits. Here in the Guard we have these "weekend warriors." We need able fighting soldiers, not boys and girls who will turn at the sight of an enemy child. You may be saying that I have not seen combat either? True, but I will hold myself to these same standards even then. I want to say that I enjoy *SOF* and wish I could get it regularly.

PFC Andrew D. Haney  
Oklahoma National Guard



## "I'm No Slav"

First off, I would like to say you guys print a great magazine. I'm writing you about a response you gave to a Serb who complained that you guys are giving the Albanians good press at the expense of the Serbs. In your response you stated that no Slavs of any kind work at your magazine, including Albanians. I just wanted to let you and your readers know that Albanians are not a Slavic people. We are descendants of the ancient Illyrians who were in the Balkans around the same time or before the Greeks and way before the Slavs ever immigrated there. Throughout history, our greatest enemy has always been the Serbs. So please don't call us Slavs. It's a great insult

to all Albanians all over the world.

Danny Ujkaj  
Yonkers, N.Y.

## Gun Registration

When I turned 18, I was living in Brooklyn. First thing I did was go out and get my license to own rifles and shotguns. Second thing I did was run out and buy a nice, new AK. (This was about 1985.) Each gun I bought was registered with the New York City Firearms Control Section (think about those three words for a minute). Over the next year I also acquired a Mini-14, an HK93 and an AR15 ... all duly registered.

Flash forward a couple of years ... I've gone to college and am living in the great state of Montana. My brother, still in NYC, forwards me some mail from the New York Police Department. It says "our records show you own these assault weapons ... turn them in or get them out of the city. Send us proof you no longer have them."

I, being freshly filled with Montana-ness and not in the mood for any bureaucratic Gestapo mandates, wrote them back a letter saying, "You want 'em? Come and get 'em." A few months go by ...

My brother calls and says, "Hey, remember the guy we sold the house to? Half-a-dozen cops showed up on the porch the other day looking for your guns."

Moral: Next time someone says "register does NOT lead to confiscation," give 'em my e-mail address and tell them to write me.

J., via Internet  
western@bigsky.net

## Welcome Home

Thanks for all you do for the Vietnam vets. Thought I'd contact you and say "Welcome Home!" It's been a long time coming!

Michael Hadfield  
Former: Sgt Michael Hadfield  
Pathfinder pilot; HQ/HQ Co; 101<sup>st</sup>  
Aviation Gp; 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division

## Join the NRA

Communism and Socialism today are one single political party. One branch pursues power through outright violence, the second, while showing loath for the actions of the

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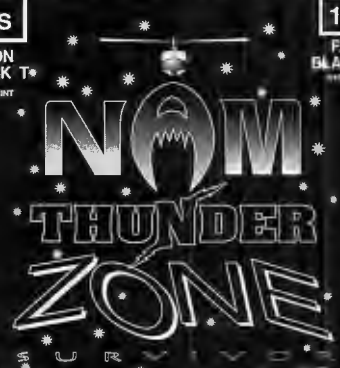
BLACK JACKET LEFT CHEST AND FULL BACK WHITE PRINT

1AD

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**NOW THUNDER ZONE**

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BLACK JACKET LEFT CHEST AND FULL BACK WHITE PRINT

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L.C. ON BLACK T  
WHITE PRINT



**AIRBORNE WARRIOR**  
SURVIVOR

6i

BLACK JACKET LEFT CHEST AND FULL BACK WHITE PRINT

1AX

F.F. ON BLACK T  
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1AZ

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WHITE PRINT



**COMBAT ZONE**  
SURVIVOR

6j

BLACK JACKET LEFT CHEST AND FULL BACK WHITE PRINT

1AY

F.F. ON BLACK T  
WHITE PRINT

1BA

L.C. ON BLACK T  
WHITE PRINT



**COMBAT**  
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first, pursues exactly the same objectives by means of rules and regulations.

Machiavelli would say that communists fight using the lion's arts, while socialists use the arts of the fox. But we must come to understand that they are the right and left arms of the same animal, and not two different entities as they would have you believe. Gun control is not a way to take your sport or your toys from you: It is socialism's means of undermining resistance to communism.

Understand this and do something by joining the NRA, to start putting a stop to their ever new rules and regulations.

Antonio Randaccio-Lodi  
Montreal

## Soldiers, Right or Wrong

I've been a longtime fan of your great magazine. As I travel, I can't subscribe but I get it at newsstands when I can. If I can't find it, I bitch.

However, on one point I differ from *SOF*; you seem to support the position of reporting more U.S. military actions than mercenary actions. Example:

Under current engagement in Kosovo, the U.S. military was sent in, in violation of the United States War Powers Act. Therefore, any American merc who would assist the Serbian government against U.S. troops would not be committing an illegal act since there is no war declared.

To my mind, a true soldier of fortune fights for any side he chooses and the hell with right and wrong in politics.

Ron Seibel  
California

## Don't Ask, Don't Cop a Feel!

What follows is the account of an incident following the surrender of Louisbourg on Cape Breten Island to H.M. forces, as reported in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* on 7 September 1758:

"And another French officer having the Impudence to run his hand under one of the Highlander's Plads, in an improper place, the Highlander immediately eased him of his Arm and Hand, by cutting them off with his Broad Sword; the Frenchman, not contented with this, drew his sword, in order to take revenge, but the Highlander being on his guard, split the Frenchman's head down to his shoulders, and then cut both Halves off."

B. Ruce-Briggs  
Idaville, Penn. ✕



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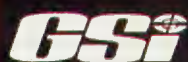


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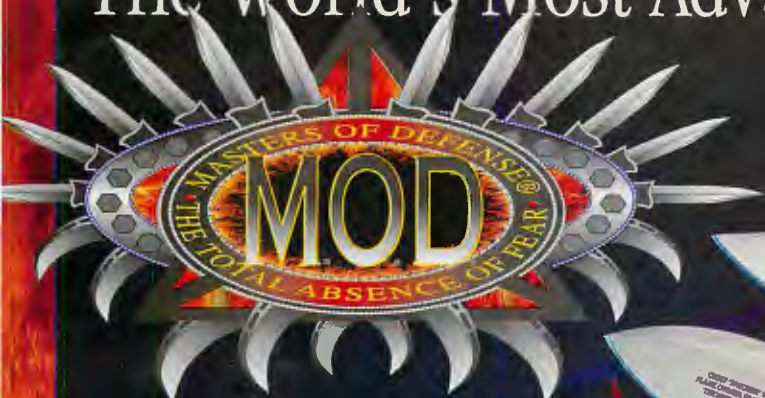
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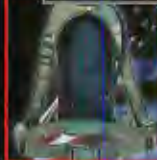
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intensity laser that can be easily activated by either hand. The manufacturer characterizes the windage and elevation calibration as simple, precise and reliable. Lasergrips are contoured and checkered for comfort and a master on/off switch at the base of the grips allows for complete system override.



Lasergrips for S&W J-frame revolvers were introduced last year. The laser is a class IIIa visible laser diode with approximate beam size of .5" at 50 feet, powered by two DL2032 lithium cells with more than four hours running time and a five-year shelf life.

For more information contact crimson trace Corp., Dept SOF, 1433 N.W. Quimby St., Portland, OR 97209; phone: 800-442-2406; fax: 503-295-2225; or via the web at: [www.crimsontrace.com](http://www.crimsontrace.com).

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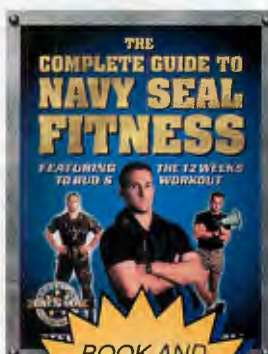
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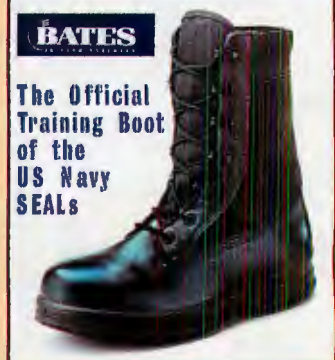
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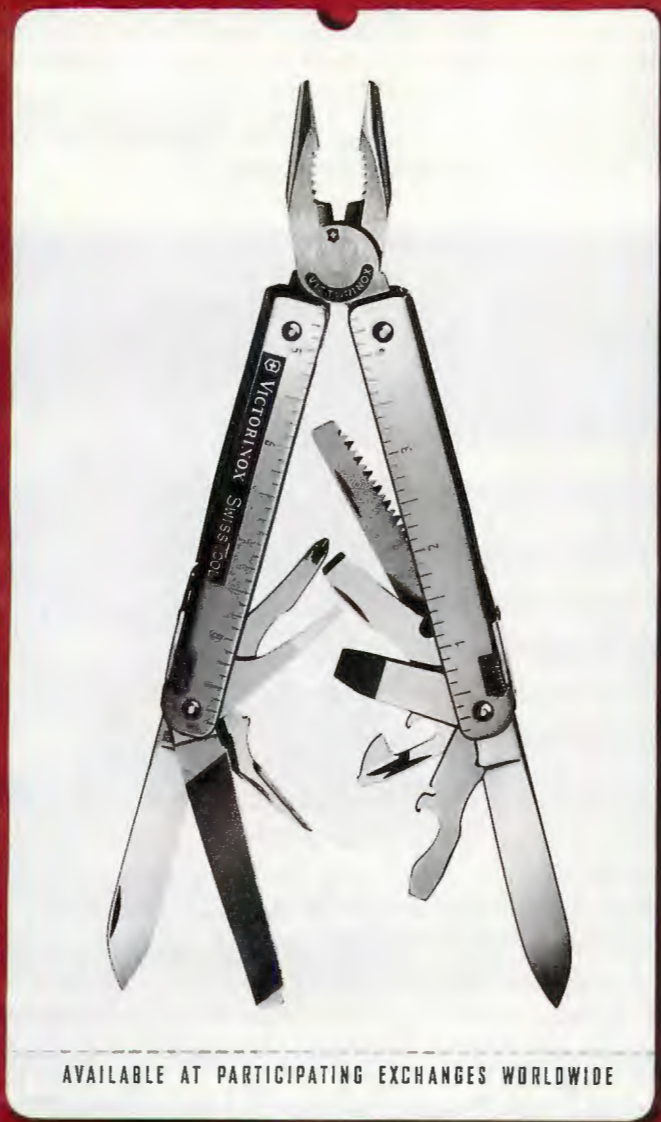
AN ARMY HOSPITAL IS HIDDEN IN A MOUNTAIN.  
 A HIGHWAY DOUBLES AS A RUNWAY.  
 A DENTIST IS A GENERAL.  
 SO WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE SWISS MAKE  
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The assignment was pliers. The engineers were Victorinox,® makers of the Original Swiss Army™ Knife. The result was far from ordinary. Twenty-three tools fashioned from stainless steel. Each can be accessed easily and quickly—without needing to open the pliers first. Each tool operates on its own spring, opening individually and never in a cluster. And once opened, every tool locks firmly into place. We call it the SwissTool. From the country where few things serve merely one purpose.

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Normally retailing @ \$18.95 plus \$3 shipping, the map case is offered especially to *SOF* readers at a \$5 discount for \$16.95 post-paid. They accept plastic or money orders and have a reputation for getting orders right out. Pueblo Diversified Industries, Dept. SOF, 2828 Granada Ave., Pueblo, CO 81005; or phone: 800-466-8393 and ask for Mark Bunch.

## Quiet Counts

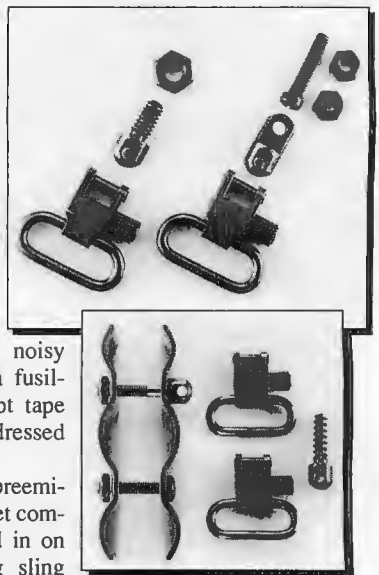
Some 40 years ago, this writer served with the first overseas outfit to be issued M14 rifles in exchange for our Garands, BARs and M3A1 greaseguns. The new M14 was a good rifle and well received, but as with anything new, bugs became apparent with field use. The rifles were soon called back to ordnance and the upper handguards replaced with ventilated synthetic ones. The heavy-barrel "M15s" we were told we'd get to replace the BARs never did materialize, but each rifle squad got two M14s with the selector installed, and bipods; after I got out, the M14E2 with its heavier, pistol-grip stock became the final replacement to the old BAR. One of the most-tested designs ever fielded, only two mechanical problems come to mind: the gas system on the first-issue M14s could be assembled and fired (once!) with the piston bass-ackwards, and the sling swivels rattled. The piston design was promptly redesigned and replacements issued, but as far as I know, the slings swivels on an M14 still rattle. Nothing against the

M14, of course, as more sling swivels rattle than don't. Snuffie's quick fix was the same as for everything else he was issued: wrap the sucker in 100-mile-an-hour tape until it's good to go.

On the range or on a hunt, noisy sling swivels will only get you peeved glances, but if the long arm is a tool of the military or police trade, noisy sling swivels may get you a fusillade. Odd that no one except tape manufacturers has really addressed this before.

Uncle Mike's, one of the preeminent accessory and after-market companies, has effectively zeroed in on this problem by introducing sling swivels which are quiet because they are built to tight tolerances that eliminate rattles and squeaks. Their new Quiet Super Swivels® are now all manufactured to this standard. In addition to Quiet Swivels, Michaels has introduced (inset) new QD swivel and swivel-base sets for many popular defense and police shotguns with extended mags and 1" flashlights: Remington 870, 11-87 and 1100; Winchester 1200/1300; Mossberg 500, 590 and 835. Another swivel set has been introduced for the expansive AR-15 family of rifles, replacing the non-detachable sling loops on the AR-15 and Colt Match Target Rifles. All QD Quiet Super Swivels feature Michaels' patented SwiveLock®, which gives extra security against accidental opening.

For a 1999 catalog of their full line of accessories and gear, send \$2 to Michaels of Oregon, Dept. SOF, Box 1690, Oregon City, OR 97045; phone: 503-655-7964; fax: 503-722-5701; e-mail: info@michaels-oregon.com . ✉



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*This man had 3 high-ranking black belts and over 300 street-fights in 20 years, yet 15 minutes of this undefeatable system he knew Jerry's guarantee was for real. Let him tell his story.*

Let me tell you buddy, when you have a little age on your butt and there are four Gang-Bangers shoving you around and making rude gestures at your wife, you want to act. Look, I didn't care about getting pushed but if they touched my wife I was in the game. Only this is no game. There's four scumbags with weapons moving all around me. I can take one out with a kick. But by the time my foot comes down, two of them will stab me in the back. If I body-tackle the biggest and grapple him down to choke him out, the other 3 will just kick my head off. Or the guy with the gun will shoot my knee-cap off and I will be helpless as they rape my wife.

## Wake Up! Street-Fighting Skills Aren't Enough!!!

You better wake up out there, this is the real world. Not even my street-fighting told me how to handle this. I was lucky they weren't out for blood. They just wanted to intimidate me. I was damn angry. Not at what happened. Hell, my ego wasn't the deal. Staying alive was! I just realized that I spent \$5,000-7,000 hard-earned dollars (not to mention the years) to learn what only works in a ring or a cage with referees and men that think they can street-fight. Yeah, they pick up a chair or use a broken bottle or knife but they never really know what they're doing. Look, let's just stop here, if you've read this far you're probably one **Tough SOB** like me, if you're not, stop reading this information. It's not for the weak-willed who have to get drunk to get up the guts to have a slap fight. It's for you real men that want to know the TRUTH about lethal fighting skills. I knew that after 5 minutes of watching Jerry Peterson's lethal SCARS® system he was nothing short of revolutionary. He'll change your mind about power and fear. I don't know if you believe in a God but Jerry must be talking to him. There's just no other answer to how he solves complex fighting problems. Jerry says, "It's in the math but it doesn't hurt to have God on your side." Don't make the mistake I did in '93, the first time I read about this system, "Thinking how could it be true?"

## This Guy Is "Nothing But Hype"

**Wrong**, the documentation is there. The government backs it up. He's taught, developed and standardized combat schools for the SEALs and other Special Operations Forces not just in the US but also with NATO groups.

## Ask Yourself, "Can I Handle The Truth?" If You Can, Then Here Is Real Credibility.

Jerry Peterson's SCARS was demonstrated on a secure military base, in true combat fashion, to no less than the *US Secretary of Defense*, the leading *4 Star General*, plus the *Secretary of the Navy* and powerful *Congressional Leaders*. They all watched in total amazement as the SEAL's executed fighting skills never before seen, absolutely flawless on every combat action they took using guns, knives, full gear, single and multi-fighting and most impressively their bare hands. **SCARS never failed them and it will never fail YOU!!!**

## If That Doesn't Blow Your Mind This Will

You can bet your life on this man's credibility, 30,000 other professional men have. You can't waste one more day learning a sport system that has counters to every move. **With SCARS you're undefeatable!** Look, do you think Jerry could have achieved his renown credibility if the secret SCARS science of lethal combat could be countered. Absolutely not! The fact is, Jerry Peterson is the one civilian in the history of the USA to have accomplished such professional credibility. I challenge you to find one individual that has ever gotten their fighting system to be reviewed by such powerful leaders at the same time. Of course, to make it more unfair, also get the official stamp of approval for implementing their system as required training for the US military. Want to check this out? Here is just one of the official course numbers K-431-0096, check it out with the Navy. I did, boy was I impressed when they gave me the list of what this guy has done. It only took me six months. Damned bureaucratic red tape!

## Want More Credibility?

Jerry Peterson's SCARS project is the only system ever to pass all the combat requirements of the United States Defense Department. Then to go one better he raised that standard and personally trained the elite Navy SEALs, some made it, some didn't. But those that did today hold the coveted SCARS/CFC qualification of subject matter experts in the field of hand-to-hand and hand-to-weapon combat. By the way, this qualification becomes part of their official military records. In fact, there would be no experts if Jerry Peterson did not license the SCARS-*Combat Fighting Course* to the Navy. Are you getting the picture? Don't wait as I did. Don't be fooled by the follower's...

## You Know The 'Little Men'

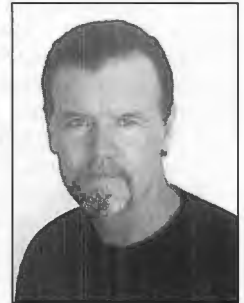
Ever since 1993, self-proclaimed military 'gurus' and some street-fighters have been **following Jerry** making clever claims, *if you read between the lines there's nothing but ambiguous claims and self-given titles*. Have you noticed nobody produces any official paperwork?

## Jerry Peterson Is Absolutely For Real

This is what you'll find out. Don't wait. Let go of the past and learn the science of Lethal Combat. This is the first and only original Navy SEAL System. **YOUR LIFE WILL DEPEND ON IT!** Sorry, I'm jumping ahead let me explain why the martial arts can't and won't get the official documentation. First the system has to be universal to all men. This means that 100 men go in. One-hundred men come out 100% efficient in all aspects of CQB (close quarters battle). To prove that the government must test, and test SCARS they did, for over five years in real field conditions, on all terrains, including water with real weapons and in real conflicts. I'm not going to get into all the government testing, that will take forever. Plus there are some we can't talk about. But in all those years SCARS never failed EVER!! And that's why it's still the standard.

**In Fact SCARS Set "New Standards"...** for hand to hand, knife fighting, rifle combat, and much more. SCARS is also taking the Law Enforcement community by

storm. The summer Olympics Special Security team was required to take our IQS-1 Series just to qualify to get on the team and **YOU** can have that same knowledge and training. This is your once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to become **undefeatable** (with or without a weapon) with the SCARS **Professional Fighting System**. Why?



Jerry Peterson

## Because Your Life Is Worth Saving

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The full menu, so to speak, appears on our website: [sofmag.com](http://sofmag.com); or, you can phone Ms. Barbara Loomas, at 303-449-3750, ext. 300, for information and details download.

To give you a sneak preview, though, here's a tad of what's on tap for the 1999 Soldier Of Fortune Convention: The Banquet Keynote Speaker is Jeff Cooper — founder of the American Pistol Institute and globally recognized as the father of modern pistolcraft. His storied career includes being Founder and first Director of the Southwest Pistol League; Founding President and Honorary Lifetime Chairman of the International Practical Shooting Confederation; Editor At Large of *Guns & Ammo*; Outstanding American Handgunner — 1995; and Member of the Board of Directors of the NRA.



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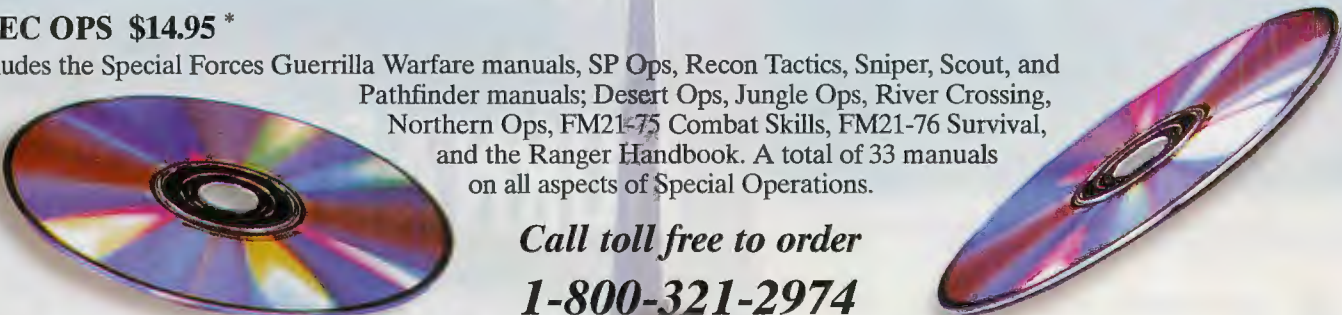
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Jeff Cooper, 1999 SOF Convention Keynote Speaker

Your banquet ticket *is* included in your Conventioneer fee of \$150.00, which must be received by 23 August (\$175.00 thereafter).

Among other benefits and gifts, you'll be admitted, without further cost, to the Expo Hall, Firepower Demo, Awards Banquet and *all* Seminars.

Seminars include:

**KOSOVO** — SLICK WILLIE'S BUNGLED WAR; presented by LTC Robert K. Brown, USAR (Ret.), *SOF's* well-known Founder, Editor and Publisher.

**WOUND BALLISTICS: SEARCH FOR THE MAGIC BULLET**; presented by *SOF's* Technical Editor Peter G. Kokalis.

**THE SCOUT: A RIFLE FOR IRREGULAR WARFARE?**; presented by Jeff Cooper.

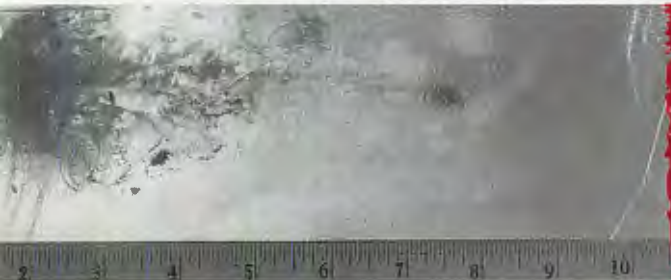
**CIA COVERT OPS DURING THE COLD WAR**; presented by Major General John K. Singlaub, USA (Ret.) and Brigadier General Harry C. "Heinie" Aderholt, USAF (Ret.).

**POWs: WHERE DID THEY GO?**; presented by Jim Warner, a 5-year *guest* in the Hanoi Hilton, and presently one of the legal counsels for the NRA.

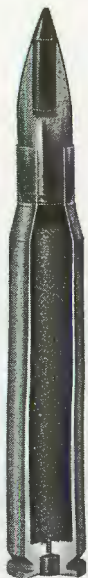
**COLOMBIA — LATIN AMERICA'S VIETNAM?**; presented by Major Gil Macklin, USMC (Ret.)

As usual, we'll sponsor numerous participatory events, including the Basic SOF Jump School, Basic Combat Medicine Course, Underwater Escape Techniques, the SOF Submachine Gun Shoot, Knife-Fighting Contest *and*, for your viewing, and listening, pleasure — *SOF's* World-Renowned Firepower Demo.

And, back again this year is the *Soldier Of Fortune* auction, where an array of medium- and high-ticket items will be sold to benefit *SOF's* legal defense fund and other charitable organizations. A featured item will be Special Forces balladeer Barry Sadler's guitar, purchased in Guatemala and donated to the auction by Ben Rossen, Barry's amigo for many years.



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## Former Special Forces Doctor Might Be Exonerated

Dr. Jeffrey R. MacDonald, in prison since 1979 for the alleged murders of his wife and daughters, might emerge a free man within a few months (or sooner) due to upcoming DNA testing on previously unknown hair samples and other particles — which were withheld from his defense counsel at the time of his trial. Those who tab Jeff as guilty might wish to read *Fatal Justice*, by Jerry Potter and retired SF SGM Fred Bost. As Jeff himself writes, “No one but government prosecutors has ever seen these exhibits, which were used to convict me (falsely) in 1979. Government files, in the form of lab notes written by government investigators, alerted us from 1983-1997 that the evidence actually supports my innocence.” More information can be found at the Dr. Jeffrey MacDonald website: [www.themacdonalddefense.org](http://www.themacdonalddefense.org). DNA testing is enormously expensive. If you'd like to see justice done (after 20 years), please forward financial contributions to: MacDonald Defense, P.O. Box 3634, Fullerton, CA 92831.

## Applegate Gun And Knife Auction

On Sunday, 26 September, the gun and knife collection of Colonel Rex Applegate (1914-1998) will be sold at auction by J.C. Devine, Inc., of Milford, NH, at the Wayfarer Convention Center, in Bedford, NH.

The life of this remarkable man reads more like an adventure novel than a biography. Applegate was one of the first agents to be picked for the fledgling OSS in 1941 and attended Britain's elite Commando Training School, learning from the likes of W.E. Fairbairn and E.A. Sykes. In 1942, after returning to the U.S., Applegate and Fairbairn set up the OSS Combat Section at Camp Ritchie, Maryland, with the aim of teaching close combat techniques to the growing number of OSS operatives. It was during this period that he wrote two of his books: *Kill Or Get Killed* and

### *Scouting and Patrolling.*

After the war, Applegate spent 10 years in Mexico — first as a civilian businessman, then as a brevet Brigadier General in the Mexican Army supervising anti-riot operations and devising tactics to control unruly mobs without resorting to deadly force.

Colonel Applegate began his knife-designing career during World War II in the OSS machine shop with revised versions of the F-S Commando knife and smatchet. The 1980s saw his ideas coming to fruition with custom editions by Bill Harsey and T.J. Yancey, as well as full-production versions by makers such as Gerber, Boker, Al Mar, Buck, Blackjack and E.M.F.

He also had a deep interest in trick shooting (Applegate's uncle was famed Remington exhibitor shooter, Gus Peret), and amassed an extensive collection of firearms belonging to famous shooters such as Ad Topperwein, Elmer Keith, Bill Jordan, Charles Askins, Jr., Ed McGivern, D.B. Wesson, and, of course, Col. Applegate himself.

With Col. Applegate's passing, an era in American shooting and combat instruction has ended. It's certain, however, that the techniques and weapons that Col. Applegate developed and perfected will have an influence well into the future.

Catalogues for the auction sale are available by phoning J.C. Devine, Inc.; Tel.: 603.673.4967; Fax: 603.672.0328; Email: [jcdevine@empire.net](mailto:jcdevine@empire.net)

## Oklahoma City Update

Cate McCauley, former Executive Director of The Oklahoma Bombing Investigation Committee, writes about the state of Oklahoma's upcoming trial of Terry Nichols ... “While many believe a state conviction is predetermined, federal jurors came very close to acquitting Nichols by a vote of 10-2. They settled instead on a conviction of one count of conspiracy, eight counts of manslaughter, and then deadlocked on the sentence.” *This case isn't settled, believe me.* — Editor

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## Michael New Legal Defense Fund

Michael New writes, "In January 1993, I volunteered to serve my country by joining the U.S. Army. In January 1996, I was court-martialed and thrown out of the Army — because I refused to serve in the anti-American United Nations. ... He [Clinton] wanted us to go [to Macedonia] as U.N. soldiers ... under the U.N. flag ... wearing baby-blue U.N. uniforms ... carrying U.N. identification cards ... and taking orders from foreign officers who had sworn their allegiance to the U.N."

Michael needs your help. Please send donations to: Michael New Legal Defense Fund, #408, 2721 H-I-J Merrilee Drive, Fairfax, VA 22031-4407.

## Check Out This Website

A very intriguing, useful and readable website is Phil Caloe's and James Marchington's (sponsor and editor, respectively) [www.combat-online.com](http://www.combat-online.com).

## MAIL! A Morale Booster

Friends Of Our Troops, P.O. Box 65408, Fayetteville, NC 28306-5408; Tel.: 910.426.7379 (G.B. Wiser); Website: <http://www.militarymail.org/>, announces that "Units which are deployed or which are about to deploy, as well as units which are assigned to remote locations can sign up for morale-boosting mail! ... Mail from all over the nation is sent to Friends Of Our Troops headquarters. After being intermixed it is made up into well over 1,000 packages of mail to be sent out. 'The packages range in size from just a handful for small units up to several thousand for an entire base or a large ship.'"

## Another Muscle-Bound, Anti-Gun Propaganda Farce ...

Sport & Health Clubs, D.C.'s largest health club operator, believes that the *right* to bear arms has become *wrong*. "Make a little noise in your neighborhood," they state. "Don't be afraid to ask your neighbors if they own guns, and, if so, how they are stored. If they don't have the right answers, tell your kids they can't play there." Maybe if your members are mugged, geniuses, walking through one of your parking lots, they should carry 30-lb. dumbbells to ward off their assailants? You can phone Sport & Health Clubs at 800-882-5827.

## Let's Hear It For U.S. Army-Protected — Paganism!

A 17 June 99 Scripps Howard story by Lisa Hoffman stated that "Several conservative groups acted Wednesday [16 June] to put pressure on the Army for its tolerance of the practice of witchcraft by some of its soldiers." ... "To the Army, its tolerance of the Wicca religion — along with a host of other faiths — is a matter of constitutional rights." What's next — Satanism and the Temple of Set?

## Information Needed

SOF has been investigating several new leads into the Oklahoma City bombing, including the location of a 1984 Jeep Cherokee, with a missing rear bumper, allegedly seen dropping off "Tim McVeigh" and a companion at Elliott's Body Shop in Junction City, KS. We're interested, as well, in the Fort Bragg murders of the family of Dr. Jeff MacDonald. Readers' information involving these cases to be directed to Tom Reisinger, Deputy Editor; phone: 303-449-3750, ext. 309; Email: [tomr@sofmag.com](mailto:tomr@sofmag.com). Anonymity is assured. ✂

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# SLICK WILLIE WATCH

## Stupid Bombs

The Clinton Administration is engaged in a "cover-up" to conceal the fact that U.S. planes bombed the wrong target last year when they attacked a Sudanese pharmaceutical plant, says a \$30-million lawsuit filed in federal court by Saleh Idris, the Saudi owner of the demolished plant.

In August 1998, Clinton called the factory a "terrorist-related" facility with ties to Osama bin Laden, the Saudi exile allegedly responsible for the attacks on two U.S. embassies in East Africa. U.S. officials later said they'd found traces of chemical agents in a soil sample from the plant. Idris denies ties to bin Laden, telling *Newsweek*, "I want to clear my name."

The Feds have already released \$24 million in frozen assets belonging to Idris, but a White House official told *Newsweek*, "We stand by our findings that led to the strike in the first place."

If our president says so, well then it must be true, à la "I did not have sex with that woman." We'll put our bets on Idris to prevail.

A great Clinton legacy most haven't realized yet is his disassembly of the Bill of Rights of the United States Constitution. As it's supposed to, this bill sometimes impedes government in favor of individuals. Hence, we have the constitutional provision that protects us from unwarranted searches and seizures.

Clinton used hysteria following the Oklahoma City bombing to encourage and sign new anti-terrorist legislation that makes it simple for federal agents to wiretap almost any American citizen, anywhere for almost any reason.

So when his administration learned of a potential communist Chinese spy at the Los Alamos nuclear labs in New Mexico, it should have been easy to investigate. And federal investigators did, alas, request a wiretap of suspected spy Wen Ho Lee. Lo and behold, in May the media found out Attorney General Janet Reno disapproved only *one* wiretap request in the past several years — the one investigators wanted for Wen Ho Lee.

With this little tidbit, it's becoming increasingly clear Clinton not only knew about the Chinese spy activity, but was perhaps cooperating with the Chicoms. When thinking of the spy, remember how Clinton likes to lie. Ask yourself why his attorney general would disapprove only one wiretap request — a move that would benefit a suspected spy. If he'll lie, he'll spy. Any questions?

## Lie Detection

Because of the spying allegations against China, the U.S. federal government has started polygraph testing some 5,000 nuclear weapons scientists and others at the Department of Energy, reports the *Washington Post*. It's the first wholesale use of lie-

detector tests in government beyond the CIA and the National Security Agency.

Energy Secretary Bill Richardson said he decided to start the tests to send a message that protecting nuclear secrets is a top priority. However, Richardson is concerned the move will make it difficult to recruit top-rate scientists. He's probably right. Just what kind of educated professional would want to sacrifice their dignity at the altar of Clinton lies and screw-ups?

And why should department employees be subjected to thousands of expensive tests? One lie detector test, administered to Clinton years ago, would likely have solved the problem.

## Vice Liar

Good news: Al Gore will likely get the Democratic nomination for the 2000 election. Even better news: Al Gore is every bit the liar Clinton is, and therefore completely unelectable this time around.

Last December, at the post-impeachment party, Al Gore told the American public that impeachment was a great disservice to "a man I believe will be regarded in the history books as one of our greatest presidents."

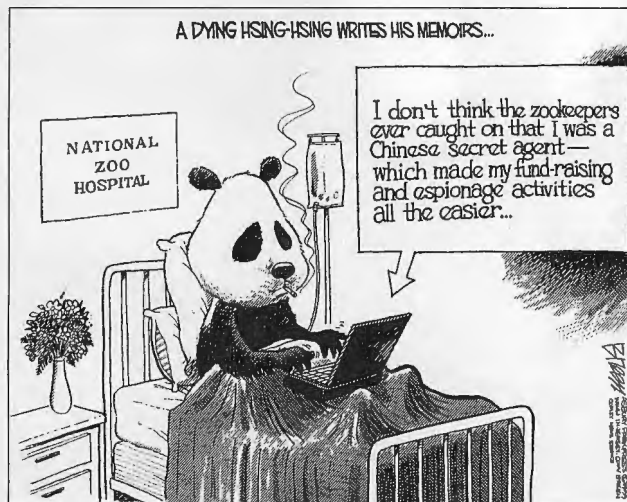
But in June, the day he announced his candidacy, Al Gore spoke with Diane Sawyer on "20/20" and denounced the president's actions with Lewinsky as "inexcusable" and "terribly wrong." These things simply don't jibe: the "greatest president," and he was "terribly

wrong."

A *New York Post* editorial titled "Al Gore, Liar," reminds us of some of the veep's other famous lies. Remember when he told us he and his wife, Tipper, were the models for the couple in Erich Segal's *Love Story*? Segal says that simply isn't true. And let's not forget how Al Gore waxed sentimental about spending his youth on a farm, when in fact he was the son of a U.S. senator and raised in a Washington, D.C. hotel. He told "Larry King Live" he invented the Internet, when in fact it was "invented" eight years before he entered Congress.

Al Gore also claimed to have had meetings with "pro-life leaders" who simply refused to see reason. Leaders of pro-life groups, unaware of any such meetings, demanded to know whom Al Gore met with. He refused to give names. Nobody has ever come forward and claimed to have met with Al Gore in such meetings. That's because the meetings didn't exist. They were lies, just like most of what's served up by the Clinton Administration.

Al Gore has served for eight years under a liar, and he's honed the craft quite well himself. But Americans are sick and tired of the lies. Having been exposed as a liar, Al Gore has no chance at all of victory in the year 2000. Voters simply won't subject themselves to another term of this crap. ❌



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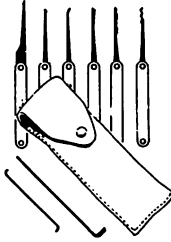
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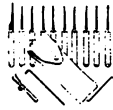
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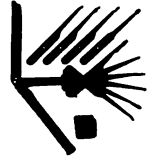
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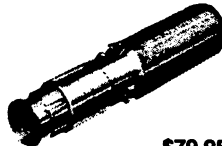
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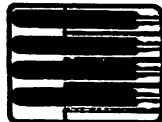
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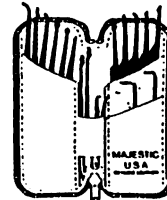
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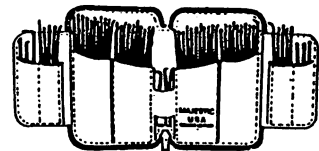
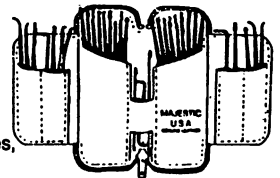


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## Rifle Tactics

The primary focus of this article is to review some of the basic rifle tactics as applied to confrontations. Before starting into the tactics themselves several points of interest should be clarified for potential rifle operators.

The first point of interest is to clear up the “range to contact” myth. It is my opinion, supported by fact, to state forcefully and in writing that the range to contact of most rifle fights is generally under 100 yards. And to press the issue, more often than not these fights take place inside what we might normally consider effective handgun range distances of 50 yards or less. Fights most often are just what they are — one of the ways we can effect the outcome of the fight is by the selection of the weapon we will take with us. Would you willingly go to a fight with a handgun?

The second point of interest is equipment. I am repeatedly exposed to operators with equipment of today’s “current technology.” Well, much of the junk doesn’t work. After market parts, second rate guns pieced together, sights with batteries, bargain magazines, fancy barrels with elaborate twists for the magic 161-grain very low drag .223 caliber ... you get the point. It is my opinion that you better have a rifle that works and it better have iron sights on it somewhere. Do what you will, but just remember you might have to bet your life on the equipment you select. Do you want magic? Or do you want iron?

This is an example of one of the leading problems when applying rifles to a fight. Just because the sight is clear doesn't mean the muzzle is. This is a significant problem in rifles whether it wears a scope or iron sights.



Two shooters with their backs to wall with weapons extended. This shows the true difference in the length of the two systems. The rifle operator is required to master the additional length. For that trouble rifle shooters gain power and ammunition capacity.

The principles of a rifle are pretty straightforward. A rifle should be fired, serviced and maintained by the individual carrying it. It should be capable of being fired from the shoulder and fire an effective rifle cartridge. Several additional things may help to make a rifle more efficient for field use. Rifles of lighter weight and smaller stature that increase mobility will be helpful. The cartridge’s over-penetration or lack of penetration for application in built up areas might be a point of interest. Reasonable magazine capacity that doesn’t impede mobility is important.

These things should all be considered when you make your selection. It has been my experience that most of your “equipment” is carried in your car from your home to the range and then carried from the trunk of the car to the shooting bench. It will be different if you are required to carry all this tactical/practical black stuff on your person for some length of time.

## Tactical Considerations

There are many points to consider in the tactical application of the rifle. I can't and we don't have space to address all of them in one article. I have selected several of what I consider to be the more important one or ones where mistakes are made most often for your review.

The first point that I would address in the tactical application of the rifle in confrontations is the operator's awareness to the mechanical offset of the sights. In scoped rifles we call this offset "parallax." It is the distance between the line of sight and the line of bore of the rifle. With rifles mounting iron sights this distance between sights and bore can be called correctly a "mechanical offset." Why is this important? What happens often is during deployment the operator has a clear sight picture of the target, but the muzzle is obstructed by some medium. So, in laymen terms the sights are clear, the muzzle is not. I know of one large elk missed, one bank robber holding a hostage missed, about 20 holes in the Tower and about 200-plus holes in our representative cover barricades here at Thunder Ranch because of failure to clear offset. Not, as you say, "OK." Try this for size. In 1985 I ran the rifle stage at the SOF 3-Gun Match in Las Vegas. As part of the drill competitors had to fire over walls approximately 3 feet in front of them. Of the 200-plus shooters, 170 shot the wall in front of them. Just because your sights are clear doesn't mean the muzzle is. Clear your muzzle first then clear the sights.

The second issue to address is "leading with the muzzle." This for the most part is whining. If you stand a person with a handgun in a weaver or isosceles firing position with a handgun beside a person with an AR15, there is generally about 6 inches difference. In some of the smaller model rifles the actual length is shorter with a long gun than an extended handgun. The real issue in a fight at arm's length or across a room is, "Would you rather shoot the oncoming threat with a rifle or a handgun?" If you select wisely then it means you must learn to manage this minimal length in and around corners, doorways and areas you may deploy the rifle in.

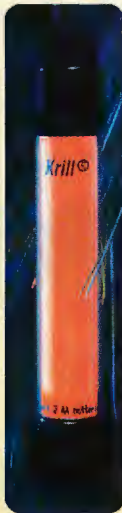
Not leading with the muzzle can mean something else as well. This tactical concept can also be applied to firing the rifle from the back of the room in urban environments instead of close proximity to windows or door openings. By staying to the back of the room you dilute the muzzle signature as well as reducing potential return fires from hitting you. Your field of view will be narrower, but so is the field of return fire towards you.

The third issue I would address is the back splash or flash of the muzzle signature when the rifle is fired too close to doors, walls, corners, etc. With many post-ban rifles no muzzle signature reducers or flash hiders are available. When fired in confined areas some of these muzzle "flashes"



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impede the ability of the operator to see follow up shots or work. Most fights are in low or altered light environments. Most walls are light colored. Most short barreled or non-flash hiders rifles have large muzzle signatures.

Try to shoot your defensive rifle in low light training. Shoot different brands of ammunition to see which one produces the least muzzle signature. Its real simple, in fights the people shooting at you may not be applying the best marksmanship techniques, but even a knot-head would or will shoot at something they can see. Two examples: Investigate the average life expectancy of a machine gunner operator once he turns the gun on in a full-fledged fight. Thirty years ago we used M14s with ANPVS2 night-vision scopes and loaded with tracers to spot or mark threats. After this spotting our indigenous troops would volley fire their BARs, M1 Garands and carbines at these tracer-marked zones. It wasn't pretty, but it was effective.

Another point of interest, I would strongly suggest you take the ammunition you intend to use and test it against different types of mediums, steel, wood, sheet rock, concrete, etc. Don't rely on some stupid video to "show" you what may happen when you use your rifle/ammunition combination against these objects. Remember, we saw Forrest Gump shake John F. Kennedy's hand. If my life may depend on the outcome I would shoot my own tests.

As a final thought please remember that the ballistic curve works in both directions. If they are in range so are you. Consider that, by definition, cover stops, turns, impedes and impairs direct and indirect fire. Put as much stuff as you can between you and the potential threat or incoming threat of fire.

For everyone of those people who are out there practicing shooting at 300, 400, 500 yards, which are notable skills to have, remember your personal fight may just as likely be at short range. You need to consider many things in the tactical application of the rifle. The presence of bystanders or loved ones may restrict the use of the rifle. The concept of reconnaissance by fire, besides being a waste of ammunition, needs to be abandoned. Your range to contact, fields of fire and observation can be restricted by structures, furniture, dust, smoke and debris. Special equipment may be needed by trained personnel who are mentally and physically prepared for close, continual room to room conflict with fleeting, moving potential targets and threats. Based on the area of application we may have to operate on familiar or unfamiliar ground, working in positions that may require us to expose ourselves to the threat in order to accomplish our desired tasks.

You might remember one of the things we teach as basic doctrine here at Thunder Ranch: You don't learn tactics because you want to use them. You learn tactics in case you have to use them.

Train hard, fight easy. ☒

*These are the same secrets used by SWAT cops and Spec-Op soldiers!*

# World-Famous Streetfighter Allows A Loaded .45 Automatic To Be Pointed At His Face And Fired...

Just To Prove He Can Teach You To Safely Disarm And Disable Barehanded Even An Armed Attacker Who Has *Made Up His Mind* To Shoot...  
And Do It As Easy As Taking Candy From A Baby!

*By Dr. R. L. Horine, Director, OTS, Civilian Fighting Division*

Dear Friend,

Find a toy or model handgun in the house you can use for a little... *experiment!* (Do **NOT** use a real gun for this!) To prove a point that will change your life (and your self-confidence) forever, I want you to do 2 things:

1. I want you to set this "training" gun aside, and watch the three videos I will send you.
2. Then, I want you to give the gun to the toughest, biggest and most coordinated friend you have... and ask him to...

### Point The Gun At You And Squeeze The Trigger!

Why am I asking you to do this? Because, I want to **prove** to you that what you see on these video tapes will allow you to instantly take that gun away (bare-handed) and *put him down on the ground* before he can move a muscle to squeeze the trigger! And once down, you will be able to **keep** him on the floor. You'll be in complete control.

As you will see in these tapes, you do not need strength, or special agility, or even previous skill in fighting. You will see how even a small man (5' 5", 140 pounds soaking wet) can easily disarm and take down a body-builder (6' 2", 240 pounds) trained in judo!

What you are about to learn are the **identical** "Disarm and Disable" tactics used by elite U.S. military personnel, big city SWAT teams, and high-profile security enforcement...

### Which Have Been Kept Secret From Civilians (Like You) For Almost 20 Years!

Now, don't get the idea the "moves" you are about to learn are difficult, just because they have been held in secret by some of the most feared fighters in the world. *The moves are simple and natural...* yet utterly devastating when used against an armed attacker. You will be able to quickly take away your assailant's gun. The secrets revealed in these amazing video tapes will give you a powerful new way of moving in the world, because...

### You Will Never Again Walk Your Streets In Fear!

Are you having trouble believing all this? That's okay — I'm used to people being suspicious... *at first*. But the truth is, what you are about to learn is praised by professional soldiers, and law enforcement personnel all over the country.

**Here is how we came to discover these "professional warrior" bare-handed fighting secrets:** For a long time now, I have been connected to the "inside" of certain elite military and law enforcement circles. (Including the Navy **SEALS** — the most dangerous soldiers on the planet.) My goal is to help civilians like you to understand the super-effective fighting skills that have been developed. I want my family to feel as safe and protected as possible, and I'm sure you want the same for your loved ones.

Anyway, through certain inside "contacts" (which I am **not** going to tell you about) I was approached by two of the most respected professional combat trainers in the world: **Randy Wanner** is a feared martial arts expert who for years has been training federal and state law enforcement agencies in "street survival fighting tactics". (He was also the former Martial Arts editor for *Soldier of Fortune* magazine.) His name is well-known among the elite "warriors" of modern-day combat, and he has gone toe-to-toe with street fighters from all over the world to prove his techniques are superior to anything else out there.

**Bob Taylor** (who spent 2 tours in Viet Nam with the 101st Airborne, MACV-SERT, and the famous 75th Rangers) is considered one

of the country's most experienced experts in counter insurgency operations; state, local and federal law enforcement agencies use him frequently for training. He is also a specialist in counter-terrorism for African, South American and Central American governments.

These two guys are in demand all over the world. Their clients include the **U.S. military**, big-city **SWAT** teams, international anti-terrorist squads and top security firms in 15 foreign countries. These clients hire Bob and Randy for just one thing:

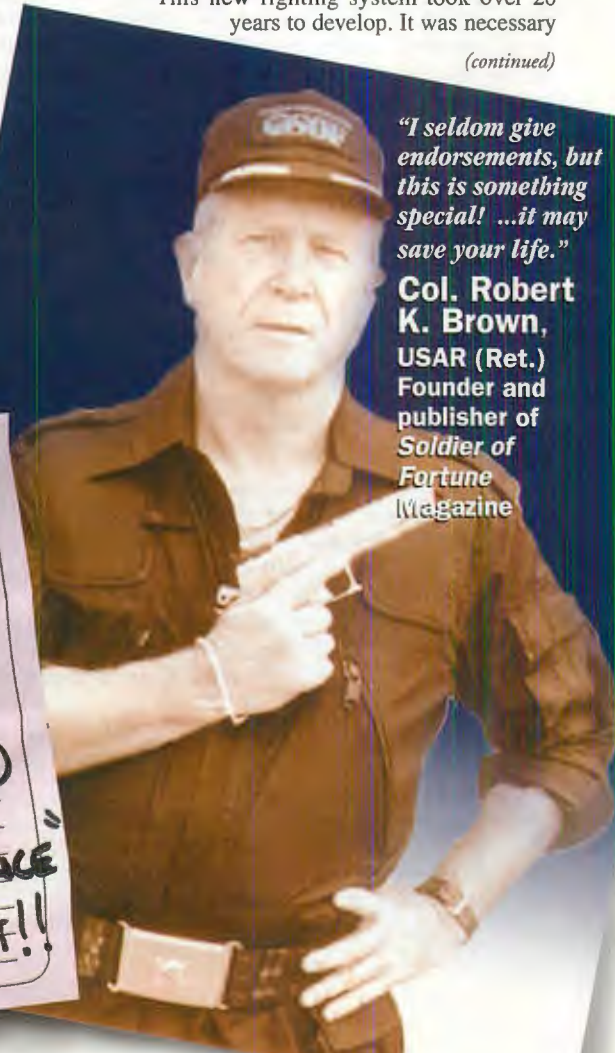
### Their Incredible Skill In Quickly Teaching Their Unique "Bare-Handed" Disarming and Disabling Techniques For Armed Attackers!

This new fighting system took over 20 years to develop. It was necessary

*(continued)*

*"I seldom give endorsements, but this is something special! ...it may save your life."*

**Col. Robert K. Brown, USAR (Ret.)**  
Founder and publisher of *Soldier of Fortune Magazine*



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Signed \_\_\_\_\_

because the techniques the police and the military used to use — based on centuries-old karate moves — simply were **not effective** in real combat conditions. Soldiers and officers who were supposed to be disarming their attackers were, instead, *getting shot and disabled themselves!*

Randy and Bob decided to find out what was wrong. There was only one sane way to do this. They used their connections within the military establishment to get “training” bullets for their weapons. These bullets (called “Red Jets”) are almost impossible for civilians to get. They are made of wax and polymer, yet are calibrated to fire from real weapons and can blow a hole in quarter-inch plywood from 15 feet. These training bullets were necessary for Bob and Randy’s research, because...

### **They Used This Live Ammunition On Each Other To Develop Their New Disarming System!**

Let me tell you — those wax bullets travel at *over 400 feet per second...* and even if they don’t tear up your body like real bullets, these guys have the scars to prove getting hit with them isn’t pretty. *No one else in the world has ever done this kind of live-weapon research!*

Their discoveries have revolutionized the way modern professional warriors approach armed attackers — already, there are cops who are on record saying these new skills have saved their lives in the street!

**Why do you — as a civilian — need these skills?** Are you kidding? The whole world has gone psycho. The odds that you will be faced by an armed attacker — without a weapon of your own to rely on — are getting worse every day. This kind of advanced knowledge (even if it is easy to learn) isn’t a luxury for American men anymore. The facts are staggering:

\* **M.I.T.** (the famous university) did a study uncovering the fact that **5 of every 6**

**twelve-year-old kids are going to be the victim of a violent crime in their lives!** That’s almost *everybody*, sooner or later!

\* Jean O’Neil (of the **National Crime Prevention Council**) says that victims who are forced into an attacker’s car *rarely* walk away alive!

\* And every kind of horrible crime is becoming more and more common — you are no longer safe in your home, at school, in your car, in a restaurant, or on the street surrounded by other people! (Jerks with nothing to lose are now senselessly shooting their robbery victims even **after** they’ve gotten everything of value.)

What’s more, new studies show that women who *fight back* are less likely to be raped. And that learning some form of self-defense is your *best bet* against a criminal population who is prepared to use force and violence on a whim.

**But there’s a BIG problem here.** The way most Americans are going about getting prepared to defend themselves is simply...

### **Not Going To Work!**

Here are the facts, my friend: Most martial art studios are run by people who have *never been in a real fight before in their lives...* and you will probably be trained (in a *huge* class) by people who have been prematurely promoted to “black belt” just to handle the classes! These “store front” studios operate exactly like health spas — they lure in large numbers of people, and get the money up front. It’s a business.

And the garbage being sold to **women** offers only the pale illusion of self-defense: Tear gas **will not work** on a drug-crazed attacker intent on harm. Even the fancy alarms and sirens people are “arming” themselves with are worthless in most cases of attack. (They don’t protect cars, they don’t protect houses, and they won’t “protect” you either.)

**In reality, you have only two choices:**

Remain a vulnerable “potential victim” who trusts that God will protect you... or learn the **RIGHT** way to defend yourself.

It’s not hard to do. In fact, it’s relatively *simple...*

### **Once You Understand The “Inside” Secrets!**

Well, there’s a “hitch”. You see, the only way to even get any personal training from Bob or Randy was to get into their heavily-monitored seminars. But to get in, you need *2 forms of official credentials and licenses* (plus about **\$850** for the full board of instruction). Only professionals — elite soldiers, police **SWAT** teams, high-profile security agents — have been allowed to learn this life-saving stuff...

### **Until Now!**

Why now? Because, after about a year of intense negotiation, we convinced Bob and Randy to go into a video studio and produce the **first video package ever** of their most trustworthy techniques for facing an armed attacker bare-handed.

And they did just that. After weeks of filming and editing, they created the only package in existence for people (like you) outside the world of professional warriors. **Yet they pulled no punches in presenting their new fighting system!** What you get here is all their best techniques, best advice, and best training methods!

In this amazing, just-released video package you’ll receive a **comprehensive full-length video** (over 80 minutes) — teaching you all the advanced combat techniques for instantly disarming and disabling (bare-handed) any assailant coming at you with a gun, club or knife (the most common weapons you’ll see on American streets!)

The techniques you will discover on these tapes are the *identical* ones taught to elite

## *Here is just a sample of what you’ll learn about...*

### **DISARMING A GUN ...**

- \* How to “jockey” for your best first-strike position during an attack!\* **How to instantly tell if a gun is in “Condition One”** — military jargon for “ready to fire”! (This “inside” weapon knowledge could give you a precious extra second in any confrontation... enough to choose your best next move!)
- \* The *most important* (and *toughest*) decision you **must** make in any armed confrontation... and how to make it intelligently and morally (so you never have to second-guess yourself later!)
- \* **Why the incorrect disarming techniques will actually force your attacker to fire... whether he’s decided to or not!**
- \* Why a man with a gun standing just 2 feet away from you is at a disadvantage... and

how to use simple “leverage” to make him regret it forever!

### **... A KNIFE ...**

- \* **How to tell when your attacker is just “bluffing” with a knife... and when he’s about to commit to stabbing you!** (Crucial knowledge for making your best fight-ending move!)
- \* **How to protect your most vulnerable “targets” during a knife fight... and how to use these rapid-blood loss areas against your assailant to end the fight instantly!**

### **... A STICK, A CLUB, OR A BASEBALL BAT ...**

- \* How to tell where the “sweet spot” of a club or baton is... where all the *damaging* power is located! (And how to avoid it!)
- \* Where the “safety” area of the club is: the 20% of any swing where the power of the club is wasted (and where your opportunity

to *end the fight* lies!)

### **... BAREHANDED ...**

And, once you’ve disarmed your attacker and are facing him bare-handed... well, that’s just child’s play now. These tapes will show you:

- \* **How to use the secret of your body’s natural “fulcrums” to bring anyone to their knees... using only 12 pounds of pressure and a tiny “torque” of your wrist!** (Once you understand the secret, even a fighter twice your size can be dropped in a blink... with no more exertion on your part than you’d use to open a tin can!)
- \* The 4 crucial moves you must make when being “held up” from behind! (Or being forced to kneel from behind... one of the more *common* assault techniques used by desperate criminals and hostage takers!)

soldiers, SWAT team cops and high-security personnel...

**With One Important Difference!**

In these videos, you get the incredible advantage of seeing everything via **3 separate cameras** (mounted stage left, right, and overhead)... so you get *multi-angles* and *slow-motion repetitions* of each and every move! This means you get an increased understanding... and you'll follow a faster "learning curve" than even the professionals get during a seminar!

This is no Hollywood B.S.... these are real techniques used by cops and soldiers! **And make no mistake** — this stuff should *only* be used when you are faced with what the professionals call "**Condition Red**": The point where you have **absolutely** decided that your assailant has already made the choice to harm you... *and you must act to save your life!*

That's what this tape package is all about. You, ultimately, have to take responsibility for yourself, and for your actions. We can't do that for you. Neither can we guarantee that what you learn here will make you invulnerable to harm — that would be a stupid claim, and you would be a fool to believe it. No, what you have here is an **OPTION**. You are giving yourself one more (powerful) choice in this crazed, dangerous world — the choice to not be a vulnerable victim who has no idea what to do... even though you know that certain harm is imminent!

I don't rob people. I don't like to hurt anyone, and I don't like to see other people get hurt. It sickens me that the criminal element has taken over our streets, and is invading homes with impunity. That *sucks* — and I, for one, am damned glad to have tools like these to *take back* my little piece of the world.

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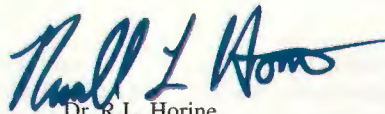
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Sincerely,



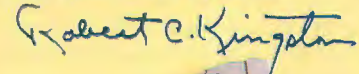
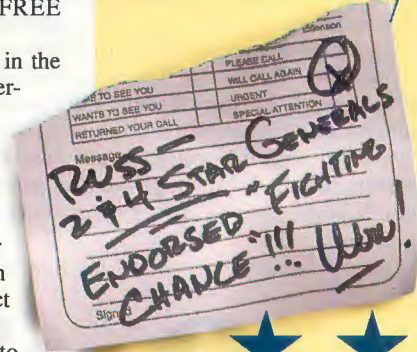
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# I Was There

by John Prester

*Editor's note: The names in this article have been altered; the events have not. TIME ran an article on 1 January 1973 pertaining to heroin being shipped Stateside inside the bodies of American KIAs. There was no sequel.*

**I**t will probably not come as a shock to anyone that South Vietnam was a virtual sea of drugs. But I witnessed several events firsthand that led me to believe that elements of the United States government and CIA were up to their grimy necks in the drug trade.

Before you crucify me as an anti-American, red-loving traitor hell-bent on disseminating bogus, near-treasonous information, read on.

I arrived in South Vietnam in January 1968 for my second tour of duty with the U.S. Army Special Forces, and eventually CCC (Command and Control Central) out of Kontum. From there we conducted primarily cross-border ops into Cambodia and, on occasion, into Laos, although we also performed operations in South Vietnam proper, including prisoner snatches and enemy interdiction.

While on one of the latter operations the first bizarre incident

even one, to India.

As I approached one plane, I noticed stacks of burlap-wrapped bales held snugly in the cargo webbing hooked to the deck. I placed one foot on the loading ramp and was about to crawl into the fuselage when one of the pilots, my dear friend Jerry, moved smartly toward me.

"Jerry, hey! What's up?"

"Prester! What the fuck are you doing?"

"What the hell, Jer, I was just ..."

"I don't give a damn! Get outta here, John, before both our asses get in a crack. Don't say anything, don't look at anything, don't even think anything, just move your ass outta here!"

As I walked off I smelled a distinctive odor — sweet, cloying and weird — emanating from the burlap bales.

Over the subsequent months I experienced several equally disturbing incidents involving these now-ubiquitous wrapped parcels: twice more in the Vietnam jungle and once inside Cambodia, where my team got a magazine emptied at us. My suspicion of a major dope-smuggling operation began to form.

## THE *Opium* EXPRESS

occurred. We were paralleling the border, going south, heading for an suspected NVA supply point when we came upon a very strange sight. We spotted a group of about 75 unarmed indigenous civilian personnel, around 10 heat-packing CIDG (Civilian Irregular Defense Group) troops and a trio of Americans in civvies apparently taking a break.

The unarmed civilians were grouped around a number of large, burlap-wrapped bales. After about five minutes, these individuals hoisted their burdens and, safari-like, balanced them on their heads and moved out, their indig armed guards and American companions flanking and leading.

Bewildered, we continued on with our mission. Upon our return to headquarters, our strange incident was inserted into our after-action reports and repeated orally during our debriefings.

A couple of days hence, I was called into Major Baker's office for a session that was brief and to the point:

"Prester, this group of civilians you ran into the other day?"

"Yes, Sir?"

"You *didn't* run into them, you don't know anything about them, you never heard of them. Clear?"

"Clear. Yes, Sir."

"Rewrite your report to that effect."

A week later, while wandering around the base, I happened to stroll over to the airstrip where several unmarked C-123s were off-loading cargo and being refueled. Most of the 123s had been taken over by Air America, even then known as the CIA's proprietary airline. I suppose being "sterile" offered some deniability.

Air America aircraft were nothing new — they landed at my base quite often and C&C personnel (myself included) were on first-name basis with many of the pilots and had even hopped aboard for a few unauthorized R&Rs to Japan, Korea, Australia and,

The most significant incident, however, occurred in late August 1968 when I was pulling CQ duty. I was making security rounds in a Jeep, monitoring radio traffic and searching for a buddy who was sergeant of the guard. I spotted a parade of indig — with bundles on their heads — wending their way along the airstrip, heading for a parked and darkened C-123.

I drove closer to the aircraft. Then I heard a scrambling behind me. I whirled around with my M-16 when something hard, cold and unmistakable pressed against my neck. My weapon was yanked from me and I found myself surrounded by little dark guys in civilian clothes, pointing their array of AKs and M-1 carbines at me. The guy whose pistol was rudely screwed against my neck blurted out something in Khmer. Moments later, an American with a New York accent, blue jeans and Aloha shirt appeared.



John Prester (second from left) prior to early morning security patrol on (formerly) Rhodesian ranch c. 1977.

"Soldier, you're in awfully deep shit." He checked my ID and got on his radio, then stared at me.

"Prester, you're a lucky sonofabitch."

The following morning, I again found myself in Maj. Baker's office. Seemingly satisfied with my explanation, he dismissed me with a icy admonishment, "Prester, you're a good soldier, and I'd hate to see anything — untoward — happen to you. You have no idea what's involved here; it's best that you never do."

During September '68, a close friend of mine was KIA and, along with others, I volunteered to accompany his body to Saigon, where it would be prepared for transshipment.

We turned over our friend's remains at graves registration, located at Tan Son Nhut Airport, and headed toward the 5th Group Motor Pool's sub-location for SF personnel in town on official business. On the way, we ambled past the Air America hangar and saw a very uncommon sight: About 40 aluminum government-issue caskets stacked up against the far outside wall.

Early the next evening I was accompanying a young local lovely on a tour of one of Saigon's less reputable neighborhoods when I noted a rather sweet, cloying and weird odor.

We were passing a sizable warehouse at the time and I observed several armed Vietnamese civilians lounging about out front. You must remember that there was a war going, and thus the civilian ownership of weapons was frowned upon by officialdom. We slowed our pace and I asked my ladyfriend, "What's that place?"

"Not look! No stop here! That place number ten thousand!" She bolted, and I rushed to catch up.

She blurted out, "'merican people there! Not Army — CIA!"

"What's in there?"

She looked at me like I was a crazy G.I. "Opium!" she said sharply, then scurried away.

The next morning I wended my way back to the transient barracks to change into my tiger-stripes. Again passing the warehouse, I spotted the same *blue* deuce-and-a-half, now empty, with a canvas top, rolled up to the tops of the seats for ventilation. In the back were two CAR-15-wielding Viet civilians — and several G.I. coffins.

That afternoon, we dropped our Jeep off at the motor pool and walked back across the tarmac to the chopper which would give us a hop back to Nha Trang. As we neared that Air America hangar, a huge C-141 Starlifter with red-white-and-blue letters — "AIR AMERICA" — on its fuselage was rolling out. We watched the tow truck haul the 141 past us. Visible in front of the office next to the hangar doors was the blue deuce-and-a-half and the two CAR-15-brandishing Viets, lighting up cigarettes while the Starlifter taxied onto the runway — for its takeoff to Los Angeles.

The hangar wall was devoid of caskets.

John Prester resides in Central America. ✕

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# WORLD SITREP



1

## UNITED STATES

**No need for draft:** U.S. Army Secretary Louis Caldera insists war in Yugoslavia did nothing to reduce recruiting, and return of draft is not necessary, reports *Topeka (Kans.) Capital-Journal*. • **Tired fleet:** Army grounds entire UH-1 helicopter fleet for inspections after metal fatigue causes one of the aircraft to crash. • **Ammo shortage:** Army reports shortages of linked 5.56mm ammo for the M249 Squad Automatic Weapon and of linked 40mm ammo for the Mk19 grenade launcher. Mortar units are using M303 inserts for their 120mm tubes in order to use 81mm mortar ammunition, since 120mm ammo is in short supply. • **Hosing the troops:** Army moves to create rapidly deployable brigades which can be disconnected from their divisions and hooked up to a "logistics hose" directly from the U.S. • **New award:** Navy to award Achievement Medal to any sailor or Marine who provides leads that result in four new recruits. • **Women can sweep:** Navy moves to allow women to serve on minesweepers after finding that required modifications are relatively easy. • **Druggie status:** New Pentagon survey shows use of tobacco, alcohol and illegal drugs by members of U.S. military at lowest since tracking began in 1980.

2

## RUSSIA

**More nukes:** Government develops micro-warhead nuclear missiles to restore its ground combat superiority without bankrupting the country, according to Atomic Energy Ministry. The small nuclear warheads, with yields equal to 50-to-300 tons of TNT, could knock out a tactical target but "won't start a global nuclear war," says *London Electronic Telegraph*. • **Trash for cash:** Russia, desperate for cash, reverses ban on importing nuclear waste for reprocessing (a move worth billions in cash). Without capacity for more reprocessing, Russians plan to store the waste for decades while building new factories. • **Check not in the mail:** Government concedes it cannot pay the \$1.2 billion in Soviet-era debt and asks for six months to renegotiate terms. • **Nagorno ceasefire:** Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh celebrate fifth anniversary of ceasefire that left them as a defacto independent state. Azerbaijan continues to insist the province must be returned to its control, but has not ability to regain control of it. Province remains dependent on Armenia, which funds 35% of its budget.

5

## MEXICO

**Massacre:** Two former officials sentenced to 19 years in prison for 1995 massacre of 17 peasants suspected of supporting a guerrilla group. • **Misery and death:** More than 350 Mexicans die of starvation, thirst, or heat during 1998 trying to cross U.S. border. Mexican government says U.S. policies that forced illegal immigrants to take dangerous routes across the border was "intolerable."

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## ISRAEL

**Rocket laser troubled:** Government reports that laser system designed to shoot down incoming Katyusha rockets on Lebanon border is in jeopardy due to cost overruns.

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## LEBANON

**Mayhem:** Skirmishes, roadside bombs and artillery duels continue, mounting steadily. Israeli planes strike targets in Lebanon throughout May. Lebanon reports arresting two Israeli spies. *Hezbollah* fires mortar shells into northern Israel. Ceasefire commission condemns Israel for bombing *Hezbollah* positions in Baalbek since five civilians were injured. Huge salvo of Katyusha rockets strike northern Israel, wounding several people.

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## AFGHANISTAN

**Osama drama:** U.S. military, CIA and FBI launch several new missions in Afghanistan to track Osama bin Laden; three Americans missing from one operation.

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## SUDAN

**Pharmaceutical bomb:** U.S. lifts freeze on assets of Salah Idris, owner of pharmaceutical factory destroyed by U.S. cruise missiles, formally admitting the factory had not been a chemical warfare complex and that Idris had no links to terrorism. Sudan demands the U.S. compensate "everyone affected" by the attack and remove all sanctions imposed on their country.

15

## EL SALVADOR

**Nun murders:** Former generals Jose Guillermo Garcia and Carlos Eugenio Vides Casanova sued in a U.S. court for 1980 murder of four churchwomen from the Maryknoll Nuns. Five members of the national guard were already jailed for the crime. Both generals live in the U.S.

3

### CHINA

**Reno protected the spy:** U.S. Attorney General Reno disapproved only one wiretap request during a multi-year period, that being for accused Chinese spy Wen Ho Lee. Despite years of reports of security violations, Lee was not removed from the most vital weapons programs until the scandal broke in the press. Critics openly question whether the highest levels of the Clinton Administration were deliberately protecting China's top spy. • **New missile:** China expected to deploy DF31 missile on mobile launchers by 2003. This missile can carry a warhead based on the US W70 weapon for 5,000 miles, enough to reach the U.S. Being carried by a heavy truck, it could be difficult to destroy during a war, but is basically a retaliatory weapon. • **Enemy nation?** Poll shows 80% of Americans believe China should be treated as enemy nation, while 80% believe China is important market and trade partner. Some 51% believe China is unfriendly toward U.S. • **Chicom's denial:** Government continues to insist U.S. provided no proof of Chinese espionage campaign, and invented entire story to disrupt negotiations on Chinese entry to World Trade Organization.

4

### KOREA

**Nukes:** Japan signs \$1 billion contract on 4 May to build two nuclear reactors in North Korea. South Korea will issue bonds worth \$330 million to finance North Korea's reactors. The U.S. is seeking international cooperation against North Korea's growing missile capability, including a joint U.S.-Japan-South Korea ballistic missile warning system. • **Famine:** The UN said North Korea's famine is easing and large-scale starvation may be averted but that aid must continue. U.S. agrees on 17 May to send 440,000 tons of food, apparently in exchange for a visit to the Kumchangri underground site. • **Drugs:** Japan and Korea uncovered a huge North Korean drug-smuggling operation.

7

### THAILAND

**Army downsizing:** Army Commander in Chief General Surayud Chulanond says military to be cut another 16% to 190,000 troops by year 2007. This will be accomplished by lower recruiting and by transferring some soldier to civilian jobs in defense industries. Military will also take a less active role in national politics and foreign policy.

8

### COLOMBIA

**Drug Czar canded:** President Pastrana fires anti-drug czar Ruben Olarte on 5 May for irregularities in contracts he had issued. • The government says it would temporarily withdraw troops from a northern area in exchange for release of 32 airline passengers held by the ELN, but would not give them formal demilitarized zone until they agreed to a ceasefire and formal peace talks. • Government and FARC rebels agree on 6 May to 12-point agenda for peace talks. • Reports from FARC demilitarized zone indicated the rebels were formally policing the area and that crime was down.

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### GREECE

**Terrorist bombing:** Members of terrorist group fire anti-tank rocket into home of German ambassador.

12

### PAKISTAN

**Mass arrest:** Police arrest hundreds of followers of opposition leader Benazir Bhutto. Courts reject her appeal and order her to prison.

13

### ARGENTINA

**Embassy bomb:** Mysterious tape surfaces, which recorded orders to three policemen guarding the Israeli embassy to leave their posts just before the 1992 bombing. Argentina Supreme Court rules that Islamic extremists were responsible for 1992 bombing.

16

### AUSTRALIA

**Fighter jets:** Government furiously stockpiling spare parts for its F-111 fleet as U.S. discards them. Australians want to replace F-111s and F-18s with a single type, but are waiting until the F-22 and Joint Strike Fighter become available.

16

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# TERRORISM 101

## PART III



AP Photo/Greg Marinovich

**I**n the final part of this series we begin by examining that area of the world most often thought of as terror central, the Middle East.

"Middle East peace" has become one of the classic oxymorons of our time. In our quest for cheap oil and political ego enhancement, the United States has wound up hugging the granddaddy of all tar babies. In this no-win battleground, to embrace, or even acknowledge, any side invites attack by the others.

Abu who? One thing that has confused many observers of Middle Eastern terrorism is the plethora of players named "Abu." Are

### The Hard Road Ahead

by Richard L. Sherrow

Abu Ammar and Abu Nidal related? Are Abu Ibrahim and Abu Adnan really cousins? Actually, "abu" is merely a *kunya*, an Arabic honorific title for father. It has become the *nom de guerre* of choice for numerous globe-trotting bad guys, e.g.

- Abu Adnan (Abd al-Hammad) of the

Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

- Abu Ammar (Yasir Arafat) of *Fatah*.
- Abu Ibrahim (Husayn al-Umari) of the Arab Organization of 15 May.
- Abu Nidal (Sabi Khalil al-Banna) of the Abu Nidal Organization.

#### The Groups

While many groups ebb and flow like the changing tides, some have left an indelible mark on the landscape.

**Fatah:** Fatah, the backward acronym for *Harakat al-Tahrir al-Filistini* (Palestine Liberation Movement). From its inception,



AP Photo/Greg Marinovich

(top) An unidentified U.S. soldier wipes his eyes as others talk in front of the blast-shattered building in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, 26 June 1996, where at least 19 died and over 200 were injured when a gasoline tanker was detonated at the military base. (left) A huge crater, some 30 feet deep and 50 feet across, in front of the devastated U.S. military building in Dhahran. (right) U.S. FBI officials examine, on Thursday, 27 June 1996, remains of truck bomb that devastated American military barracks in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.



AP Photo/Greg Marinovich

and into the early 1990s, Fatah maintained both overt and covert offices throughout the Middle East and Europe.

Formed by Yasir Arafat in 1957 as the military arm of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), Fatah was dedicated to an independent Palestinian state. At the forefront of Palestinian terrorism, their actions were directed mainly at Israeli targets.

More infamously known as Black September in the early 1970s, Fatah grabbed international notoriety with its September 1972 Munich Olympics massacre, in which 11 Israeli athletes and five terrorists were killed. That same month, the group introduced the world to the letter bomb, sending them to Israeli consulates and missions in Brussels, Buenos Aires, Geneva, Kinshasa, Montreal, Ottawa, Paris, Phnom Penh, Vienna, and Washington, D.C.

**Hezbollah** (Islamic Jihad): Headquartered in West Beirut and the Bekaa Valley, Lebanon, this Iranian-inspired, radical *Shi'a* Muslim organization espouses a vitriolic hatred of anyone who doesn't support their goal of driving out all non-Islamic infestations and establishing an Iranian-style fundamentalist Islamic state in Lebanon. Since its 1983 inception, the Hezbollah has demonstrated a rabid hatred for all things Western. A few examples:

- April 1983: A suicide bomber drives an explosive-laden truck into the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, killing 49 and wounding 120.

- October 1983: In two simultaneous attacks in Beirut, Islamic Jihad suicide-jockeys pilot massive truck bombs into the U.S. Marine barracks and French military barracks, and 243 American and 56 French servicemen are killed.

- June 1985: They hijack TWA Flight 847 en route to Athens. During the takeover the terrorists single out U.S. Navy Sea Bee and diver, 24-year-old Petty Officer Robert Dean Stethem. They proceeded to beat him to death and then, in full view of TV cameras, throw his body from the aircraft onto the tarmac.

**Arab Organization of 15 May:** Headed by Abu Ibrahim, 15 May took its name from the founding date of Israel and dedicated itself to the destruction of the Israeli state. From 1982 to 1986, 15 May was identified as placing several unique bombs on international airliners. The devices, containing three-quarter-pound, PETN-based sheet explosive charges, were fused with pressure-switch-activated, electronic-delay timers and hidden under the cabin seat cush-

ions. The weight of a person sitting on the pressure switch began the timer running. When the weight was removed, by a person getting up, the timer stopped, only to restart when another potential victim sat down. And so on until detonation. They were used:

- August 1982: Pan Am Flight 830, from Narita, Japan, to Honolulu. At 22,000 feet, an explosion erupts from under window seat 47K of the Boeing 747, killing a 16-year-old Japanese boy and injuring 15 other passengers.

- April 1986: TWA Flight 840 from Rome is descending for a landing in Athens, Greece. An explosive device hidden under seat 10F (another window seat) detonates,



Italian police and security officers swarm around red car in which bullet-riddled body of former Premier Aldo Moro was found sprawled in May 1978. (below) Post-terrorist carnage. Rome's Leonardo da Vinci Airport, 27 December 1985.



killing the man sitting on it. The resulting blast tears a 5 x 6-foot hole in the side of the aircraft. Sitting in row 11, two adult women and an infant are not wearing their seat belts, and are sucked through the hole, falling 15,000 feet to their deaths.

**UNSUB:** The mystery murderers, or "unknown subjects." Those shadowy terrorists who don't seem to belong to any readily identifiable group or sponsor. Fingers of accusation seem to play a crazy game of spin the bottle — from Osama bin Laden to Iran to Iraq to ...?

What there is no doubt about is the devastation wrought by the unknowns:

- 13 November 1995: Five Americans and two Indian nationals are killed by a

truck-bomb attack directed against the Saudi National Guard training center in Riyadh. Saudi officials "persuade" four Saudi men to publicly confess to the bombing and allege ties to bin Laden, then behead them without allowing U.S. interrogators to question them.

- 25 June 1996: A massive truck-bomb tears the front off the Khobar Towers, an allied military apartment building in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. Nineteen Americans are killed and hundreds of other personnel injured. Initially, Osama bin Laden is blamed but later the blame shifts to an unknown *Shi'ite* Saudi group.

- 7 August 1998: At 1015 hours a car bomb explodes outside the U.S. Embassy in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Eleven are killed and 86 injured. Twenty-five minutes later and 400 miles to the north in Nairobi, Kenya, another vehicle bomb devastates the downtown area around another U.S. Embassy. This time the loss of life tops 210, and more than 4,500 are wounded. Again, Osama bin Laden is the initial focus of U.S. investigators, but other investigators look at Islamic fundamentalists in Egypt.

### Countering The Threat

Throughout the 1960s, festering boils of unrest were erupting around the globe — a

bombing here, an assassination there. Like a fetid odor, it hung in the air. Something was happening. But what? In 1961, Cuban militants forced a U.S. airliner to fly to Havana, and the word "skyjacking" entered the lexicon. Palestinian terrorists seized airliners, flew them to desert airfields in Jordan and Egypt, then blew them up in front of waiting TV cameras. The Vietnam War, and especially the 1968 Tet Offensive, gave worldwide rise to a

growing, and often violent, anti-war movement. By 1970 the PLO was running "terrorists wanted" recruitment ads in radical European newspapers.

In the pre-dawn hours of 5 September 1972, Black September commandos sneaked through the unguarded Olympic Village in Munich, West Germany, and stormed the dorm of the Israeli wrestling team. Two coaches were shot to death and nine athletes taken hostage. Throwing the body of Coach Moshe Weinberger out of the building, the terrorists demanded the release of some 200-plus Palestinian and Red Army Faction prisoners held in Israel and West Germany, in addition to safe transit to Cairo.

After a tension-filled all-day standoff,

the terts and their hostages were helicoptered some 25 kilometers to Furstenfeldbruck Military Airfield. Having no counter-terrorist force, the German police stationed sharpshooters between the helicopter landing site and the demanded Lufthansa Boeing 727. As soon as the first shots were fired, a full-scale firefight erupted. The terts immediately began firing and tossed a grenade into the hostage-filled choppers. When the battle ended, all nine Israelis and five Palestinians were dead. This incident would serve as a seminal event in the creation of modern counter-terrorist forces.

Finally, worried nations began to take the first shuffling steps toward addressing the growing menace.

One key area to be addressed when putting together an anti-terrorist/hostage rescue organization is, who will run the show. Usually, for political as well as tactical reasons, some countries opt for military teams, while others draw strictly from established civil law enforcement agencies. Each camp has its inherent pros and cons. The most obvious objection is that of commingling military tactics with law enforcement procedures. When times are slow, and there aren't any real terrorists to deal with, there is the politically driven temptation to justify the expense of maintaining these elite units by extending their activities into the arena of everyday law enforcement. This has been especially true in the United States. When cops try to be soldiers, and vice versa, the results can be tragic and costly.

### Some Premier Counter-Terrorists

**Special Air Service (SAS):** Having its roots in World War II, the British Army SAS

is generally considered the grand old man of SpecOps units. From wreaking havoc on Nazis in North Africa to battling terrorists in the jungles of Malaysia or the streets of Belfast or instructing anti-drug forces in Colombia, the SAS has kicked some pretty serious ass. Original developers of the stun grenade (flash-bang), they have also been called upon as "special advisers" in support of other SpecOps teams.

Although preferring to keep a low profile in its operations, on 5 May 1980, spectacular action images of the SAS were splashed across TV sets around the globe. Just days earlier, six Iraqi-sponsored, anti-Ayatollah Khomeini terrorists had seized the Iranian embassy in London. Armed with machine pistols, handguns and grenades, the invaders took 26 people hostage, issued the usual demands, and threatened to blow up the embassy along with all the hostages the following day if their demands were not met.

On the sixth day of the siege, a hostage was murdered and it was time for action. Caught on live television, the SAS team was seen using explosive entry charges, stun grenades and tear gas to storm the embassy. In the aftermath five of the six terts were killed (including two who surrendered), one hostage was killed and two wounded by the Iraqis. The SAS is definitely *not* law-enforcement-oriented. They consider those they go up against as military targets and tend not to "bring 'em back alive."

**Grenzschutzgruppe-9 (GSG-9):** Even though West Germany was already wading hip-deep in intercontinental terrorism, the country had made no provisions for a counter-terrorist force. Just six months after Munich, however, that oversight changed dramatically with the formation

of the elite GSG-9.

Made up strictly of members of the *Bundesgrenzschutz* (Federal Border Police), the GSG-9 are among the most highly trained professionals in the counter-terrorism field. One of their long-distance deployments was in October 1977 when the unit followed a gang of Arab hijackers who had commandeered a Lufthansa Boeing 737 to Mogadishu, Somalia. In a precision raid, GSG-9 commandos stormed the plane, killing three of the four hijackers and freeing all 86 passengers and five crewmembers.

**Groupe d'Intervention Gendarmerie National (GIGN):** Joining other nations, France formed its own dedicated counter-terrorism unit, GIGN, in 1974. Comprised solely of members of the *Gendarmerie* (National Police), this small (less than 100) but elite force has faced off with terrorists wherever French interests were threatened.

One of GIGN's most daring actions took place over Christmas 1994. Armed with AKMs, grenades and explosive charges, four terrorists of the brutal Armed Islamic Group (AIG) seized an Air France Airbus A300 in Algiers. After killing three hostages and releasing 63 others, the terts flew on to Marignane Airport, near Marseilles, where they killed another passenger and demanded a full load of fuel in order to fly on to Paris.

Giving great credence to intelligence reports that the terrorists planned to explode the jet over Paris, the GIGN team decided they had no choice. The jet couldn't leave Marseilles. Armed with a variety of weapons, including McMillan .50 caliber sniper rifles, S&W .357 magnum revolvers, Glock pistols and stun grenades, the commandos stormed the plane. In the ensuing firefight, all four terts were killed, and although nine GIGN men and three aircrew members were injured, all 170 hostages were rescued unharmed.

**Special Forces Operation Detachment — Delta:** Patterned after the British SAS, this elite Special Forces unit was formed in 1977 as the introductory U.S. response to global terrorism. As sometimes happens with specialized units, Delta was initially hampered by a military chain of command that was hesitant about their formation and not really sure just how to best utilize their specialized talents.

Despite some of their first (and later) tactical operations being ineptly micro-managed at the presidential level, Delta evolved into a first-rate counter-terrorist team. Although, like other CT units, their success depends on the secrecy of their operations, some of their known ops include:

- 1983: During Operation Urgent Fury, in Grenada, Delta took part in freeing prisoners and seizing key installations.
- 1989: During Operation Just Cause, in Panama, Delta conducted apprehension efforts against Manuel Noriega, as well as the successful rescue of a hostage American citizen.
- 1991: Along with British SAS, Delta



Two West German policemen run for position on 5 September 1972, near the building in the Munich Olympic Village where Arab terrorists held 13 Israeli athletes. An explosion on 27 July 1996 in Atlanta, reverberated to the earlier tragedy at the Munich Olympic games. No athletes were injured in the '96 incident.

were the first troops on the ground during the Persian Gulf War. Prior to hostilities, these SpecOps units infiltrated into Iraq to locate and destroy mobile SCUD missile launchers.

**Naval Special Warfare Development Group (DevGroup):** Following the development of Delta Force, the need for a maritime CT unit was clear. Originated in 1980 as SEAL Team Six, what is now DevGroup has, from the onset, focused on intense physical as well as high-tech training. Like other SpecOps units, DevGroup maintains cross-training and exchange programs with its sister units, both in the U.S. and around the world.

- 1985: During Operation Urgent Fury, in Grenada, team members successfully rescued Governor Sir Paul Scoon. Unfortunately, four SEALs were killed during the offshore helicopter insertion.

- 1989: During Operation Just Cause, the unit aided in the apprehension efforts directed against Panamanian strongman Manuel Noriega.

### Weapons of Mass Distraction

“Sarin gas,” “anthrax,” “suitcase nukes” “... weapons of mass destruction.”

Between the news media and shaky administration “experts,” these and similar scare-words have been bouncing off the walls like an out-of-control racquetball. While all of these must be considered as potential threats, we must be cautious in overreacting through ignorance and fear. Remember that the name of the game is terror. If you can create it without expending energy or equipment, you have still succeeded.

**Bugs & Gas:** Although the threat potential of chemical and biological weapons in terrorist hands had been kicked around for many years, it wasn’t until the Gulf War that the average citizen began to take notice. Soon the American news media was tossing around new words like “nerve gas” and “anthrax.” In no time it looked like someone had shouted “Fire!” in a crowded theater. Instead of reaching for fire extinguishers, hordes of frightened people, from Joe Six-Pack to Rodney Rolex, were swarming Army-Navy stores and mail order catalogs in a desperate attempt to snatch up surplus gas masks.

**Nuclear hysteria:** “Like trying to light a wet log with a single match” was the analogy used by developers of the atomic bomb to describe the complexity of attempting to build a workable nuclear weapon. Hollywood and professional fear-mongers aside, stealing some fissionable material, borrowing a book from the library and

whipping up a homemade nuke in your basement just isn’t going to happen. Likewise, hijacking a military weapon, flipping a switch and watching the magic mushroom grow is just about as farfetched.

Much had been made of allegations by former Russian Security Council Secretary Aleksandr Lebed, regarding so-called “suitcase” nukes. Although his story can’t be disregarded out of hand, many aspects of it are suspect.

Even those “rogue nations,” such as Libya and Iraq, who would have no compunction about using a nuclear device, have spent billions, without success, trying to add a little spice to their arsenals. Of course, on



Libyan leader Col. Muammar Khadafi sits at his desk during Soviets-only press conference, one week after the American air raid.

AP/Wide World Photo

the other hand, if they had only made out their checks to the Democratic National Committee. ...

This is not to say that the threat of a loose-cannon terrorist group or country accessing a full-blown (pardon the pun) nuclear device isn’t to be taken seriously. It’s been 20-plus years since we fielded NEST (Nuclear Emergency Search Team) and military EOD teams began specifically training for just such a threat. There is, however, the more likely scenario of obtaining and spreading, mechanically or explosively, radioactive materials. With a sensation-seeking press as unwitting accomplices, terrorists could cause untold panic, the evacuation of entire population centers and the loss of billions of dollars even by using only moderately hazardous materials.

**Cyber-terrorism:** It isn’t at all inconceivable that the new “Carlos the Jackal” might turn out to be “Pablo the Programmer.” The international terrorist of the future may have little need of explosives, machine pistols, disguises or even a passport. He won’t even have to be physically fit. Why sweat your butt off in a Libyan desert training camp when you can wreak havoc from the comfort of an air-conditioned Manhattan penthouse?

Much of the industrialized world, especially the Western civilizations, have become so absolutely dependent on com-

## Osama bin Laden: The Arabian “Carlos?”

During his 1997 Paris trial, international terrorist “Carlos the Jackal” chided the jury, “There is a Carlos myth and it is blown up out of all proportion. Carlos is here, Carlos is there, he is a Soviet agent, he is preparing a nuclear bomb to blow up New York ...”

Are we now seeing the making of a “bin Laden” myth? According to Clinton administration “intelligence” sources, Saudi Arabian expatriate Osama bin Laden is the world’s foremost super-rich super-terrorist, responsible for everything from the World Trade Center bombing to global warming.

The son of the richest building contractor in Saudi Arabia, Osama bin Laden is definitely an enigma. To the U.S. government he is the incarnate of all anti-Western evil. To an increasing number of Muslims he is seen as a latter-day Mohammed, come to drive the infidels from Islamic Holy Lands. Some think of him as a fat-cat financier who funded the Afghan *mujahideen* while safely avoiding most of the fighting. Others are convinced that he almost single-handedly drove the Red Bear from the Afghan hills.

Regardless of perception, bin Laden leaves no doubt about his hatred for Americans. He sees the United States as the new Crusaders, occupying Arabian soil and, in collaboration with Israel, bent on destroying all Muslims. His holy mission is to drive out these evil forces. As he sees it, “The Muslims drove the almighty Soviets out of Afghanistan, why not the almighty U.S.A.?”

### Al Qaeda (The Base)

Originally established, with the aid of Osama bin Laden, in Peshawar, Pakistan, during the early years of the Soviet-Afghan War, al Qaeda served as a materiel and personnel jumping-off point for non-Afghan Muslim jihad volunteers. U.S. officials now imply that al Qaeda, under bin Laden’s direct leadership, is the largest Islamic terrorist group in the world. However, each time the State Department is pressed for positive proof, it seems to come up short.

Regardless of sides, there is no denying that Osama bin Laden is a force to be reckoned with. And, to no small extent, certain ill-advised actions by the Clinton camp (e.g., cruise missile attacks on Sudan and Afghanistan) have alienated many Muslims as well as non-Muslims and driven new adherents into the bin Laden camp. There is also no denying that the Clinton administration’s “Romper Room”-style foreign policy will ultimately result in hell to pay for Americans and other Westerners for a long time to come. And Osama bin Laden may well be one of the chief bill collectors. — R.S.

puter technology to run every aspect of their lives that the slightest disruption sends waves of panic flowing in all directions. Transportation, communication, medicine, defense, commerce, banking, farming ... public toilets ... the list is endless. A series of dedicated cyberspace attacks, like the injecting of destructive viruses, could cripple services and interrupt the money flow, making the so-called Y2K threat a walk in the park.

For those who think that terrorists are hung up on bombs but not bytes, think again. Just a partial list of groups who have even launched their own Internet web sites include: *Sendero Luminoso* (Shining Path), *Tupac Amaru*, *Sinn Fein*, Jewish Defense League, Hezbollah and the Liberation Tigers of *Tamil Eelam* (LTTE).

#### Fourth Estate or Fifth Column?

As terrorists have evolved, so the mainstream news media seems to have devolved. No longer content with reporting the news as it happens, today's media, especially the broadcast gang, feels duty-bound to embellish, and sometimes outright fabricate it. Witness the CNN/Peter Arnett "Operation Tailwind" farce. When disaster scenes bring on the virtual feeding frenzy of camcorder-wielding, microphone-waving media sharks, facts are often the first casualty.

The business of reporting the news is a two-edged sword. When done by responsible professionals, it is an invaluable tool. But in the hands of irresponsible children, it becomes a dangerous weapon. It is even more damaging

when it allows itself to be manipulated by terrorists or dishonest officials with an agenda.

Look no further than recent anthrax scares, or the FBI's reckless smearing of Atlanta Olympics security guard Richard Jewell.

With an increased emphasis on entertainment over enlightenment, today's newsreaders are demonstrating a growing trend toward glitz over grit. In pedaling fear and panic in place of hon-

Britain's Special Boat Service is trained in all areas of CT operations.

est and accurate reporting, they act more as agents for the terrorists than responsible journalists. Not long after the downing of Pan Am 103, the BBC ran a "documentary" on airline bombings. Not content with explaining the basic problem, the reporters graphically demonstrated how to press out and hide plastic explosive in the liner of a suitcase, and how to conceal a detonator under the latches. You had better believe that both accomplished as well as wannabe terrors were riveted to their TV screens for that show!

There is an old adage among television news types: "If it bleeds it leads!" Remember, ABC's *Nightline* was born on the heels of the U.S. Embassy takeover in Iran. And who can forget, "America Held Hostage! Day 99, 100, 101 ... etc."

#### The Road Ahead

With the old crystal ball in for maintenance, predictions are out. However, let's try a few observations.

Clinton's global military adventures are generating more than a little international fallout. Every time some two-bit dictator breaks wind, Boy Bill deploys troops. To some, the current actions of a U.S.-driven NATO are uncomfortably reminiscent of the old Soviet-style incursions of the past few decades. Others view it as NATO siding with Muslims against "Christians." In the Middle East, Clinton is seen as leading a neo-Crusade against Arabs. Still others are shouting "racism," wondering aloud where the troops were during recent tribal "ethnic cleansing" in Africa.

Perhaps worth more than just a passing observation are these facts:

- Mother Russia is dead-set against NATO's attacks on the Serbs and the Red Bear still has a lot of ordnance on hand.

- The stumbling attempts at democracy are convincing more than a few former Soviet Bloc countries that maybe communism wasn't so bad after all, and recent elections are bearing this out.

- The majority of terrorists and insurgency groups worldwide are of the Marxist-Leninist persuasion. As we have repeatedly seen, it doesn't take much to raise these groups from dormancy.

- All the while, Slick Willie is depleting our very own armed forces, to the point that it is becoming increasingly doubtful they will be able to stand up to a major confrontation.

- Although subsequently hushed-up by Clinton and his cronies, on 18 March 1996, ATF and U.S. Customs agents in San Francisco seized 2,000 full-auto Type 56 and Type 56-1 (AK-47) assault rifles from the Chinese Communist COSCO container ship *Empress Phoenix*. The guns had both Chinese (Norinco) and North Korean markings, and were bound for sale to U.S. street gangs. Evidentiary documents showed that the next shipment was to include hand grenades, rocket launchers and heavy machine guns. Trading partners my ass! COSCO is wholly owned by the People's Liberation Army.

- Most important of all. This is an administration awash with bureaucrats who couldn't tell the truth on any subject if their lives depended on it. Unfortunately, it is not *their* lives that are being put in harm's way by the ongoing deceptions.

As Shakespeare penned in *The Merchant of Venice*, "If you prick us, do we not bleed? ... and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge?" While we have a marked tendency to jump through our hoop with "increased national security measures" every time we piss someone off, we are just as quick to drop our guard when we feel the danger has passed. It would well serve the U.S. to remember the old credo, popular among those we've dropped bombs on, "Revenge is a dish best served cold."

Richard L. Sherrow is SOF's contributing editor for forensic science. ✉

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Pugil Stick Contest

Poolside, 2000 hrs Friday.

\* These events may require separate fee.

#### Partial Seminar List

##### Live from Las Vegas!

The Great Right-Wing Conspiracy Presents:  
Bill Clinton — American Dictator  
Dr. Jack Wheeler

##### Murder in High Places

Christopher Ruddy, author of *The Strange Death Of Vince Foster*

##### Kosovo — Slick Willie's Bungled War

SOF Editor/Publisher LTC Robert K. Brown

##### Waco: What's New?

Mike McNulty, producer of the acclaimed film  
*Waco: The Rules of Engagement*

##### The Toboggan Ride to Tyranny

Vin Suprynowicz, author of *Send in the Waco Killers*

##### Did SWAT Screw Up at Columbine?

SOF Contributing Editor Rick Sherrow

##### Bombs Over the Bay of Pigs:

New facts on what went wrong.  
LTC Joe Shannon, USAF (Ret.) B-26 pilot who flew combat missions during the invasion

##### Y2K — Surviving the Crisis

noted survivalist author Ragnar Benson

##### Marine Snipers in Vietnam

Major Dick Culver, OIC of Marine Scout/ Sniper School

##### Wound Ballistics:

Search for the Magic Bullet  
SOF Technical Editor Peter G. Kokalis

##### Colombia — Latin America's Vietnam?

Major Gil Macklin, USMC (Ret.)

##### CIA Covert Ops During the Cold War

Gen. John K. Singlaub and Gen. Heine Aderholt

##### POWs: Where Did They Go?

Jim Warner, a 5½-year "guest" at the Hanoi Hilton

##### The Scout: A Rifle for Irregular Warfare?

Jeff Cooper, the gunner's guru

Seminar Schedule Subject to Change

#### Banquet Keynote Speaker

Jeff Cooper, founder of Gunsite Training Institute and father of modern pistolcraft.  
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# America's 911 FORCE

Text & Photos by Mark H. Milstein

ABOARD THE *U.S.S. KEARSARGE* — We're at Day 58 in NATO's campaign against Yugoslavia, and even now the Alliance's Kosovo Force (KFOR+) deployment was still a full three weeks off into the future, there was little doubt in anyone's mind aboard this ship which United States combat units would be the first to enter the embattled Yugoslavian province.

We are "America's 911 Force," the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) boasts to anyone and everyone within earshot.

"I like to call us 'America's floating kick-in-the-door-force,'" Captain Gabriella Margulas-Chapin, 26 MEU PAO, told *Soldier Of Fortune*, as we were welcomed aboard the *Kearsarge* after a 40-minute CH-46E Sea Knight helicopter ride from our temporary headquarters in Tirana, Albania.

At a hair under 2,200 strong and boasting its own combat air wing, artillery battery, ground attack helicopters and heli-

copter air lift capability, the United States Marine Corps' 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) was exactly what the doctor ordered for conflicts like Kosovo.

"We're also pretty damn high-tech," boasted Staff Sergeant Mickey Sullivant, as he showed *SOF* the Marine Corps' newest training tool, the Indoor Simulated Marksmanship Training (ISMAT) module. "This MEU is the first to have such a device aboard ship."

### Fun At The Midway

ISMAT, for the uninitiated, is a 21st century version of a midway shooting gallery, complete with bad guys, Surround sound and an unlimited supply of ammo. It allows as many as three or four Marines at a time, each shooting with standard-issue military weapons especially adapted to interface with ISMAT's powerful computer system, to be a part of a simulated battlefield scenario on a near-life-size color TV screen.

"A few months ago we would have gone to the flight deck or hangar deck and shot dry," Sullivant explained. "Now platoons can book the ISMAT any time, day or night, and not just shoot at targets but have the targets 'shoot' back at them. This is virtual reality. Skill levels have gone up dramatically."

Battalion Landing Team (BLT) 3/8 Sergeant Timothy Hale agreed with Sullivant's assessment of the ISMAT, pointing out how the system's simulated Balkan firefight would really prepare his men for eventual deployment. Built around an infantry battalion, the 3/8 includes an artillery battery, combat engineer platoon, an amphibious assault vehicle platoon and a recon platoon.

"There are civilians mixed in with combatants, good guys, bad guys, they're all in this village, and we can train in this environment hundreds of miles from land," Sgt. Hale explained. "It's these kinds of situations that the Marine Corps is training for. We are

# 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit

ready, because our tools and our training are getting better and better all the time.”

After experiencing both the Balkans firefight and platoon flank right simulation, *SOF* agreed with both Sullivant and Hale: ISMAT's arrival in the Marine Corps training arsenal couldn't have come at a better time.

It was time to go up onto the *Kearsarge's* 844-foot deck to watch flight ops. The 6th Fleet PAO, Lieutenant Commander Dawn Cuttler, had received word that four of the MEU's six AV-8B "Harrier II" aircraft were returning from combat air patrol over Yugoslavia. The Harriers are attached to the Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 365, which includes 12 CH-46s, four Cobra attack helos and four CH-53s. *SOF*, and all other media aboard the *Kearsarge*, were unable to watch ordnance being loaded aboard any aircraft being readied for combat, and only once during our 96



The *U.S.S. Kearsarge*, (left) as seen from the rear door of a US Marine Corps CH-46 helicopter. The *U.S.S. Kearsarge* is in the Adriatic as part of NATO's campaign against Yugoslavia, and is home to the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU). A United States Marine Corps AV-8 "Harrier" (above and below) arrives back on deck after a successful mission over Yugoslavia. The Pentagon has tasked the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit with multiple roles, ranging from providing security at refugee camps to providing close air support over Yugoslavia. (right) United States Marine AV-8 "Harrier" pilot Dale draws a smile from a safe return to ship after a successful bombing run over Kosovo.





(above) A United States Marine Corps AH-1W Cobra gunship takes off from the basecamp of the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) 3/8 BLT Lima Company. The 3/8 BLT is providing security for a U.S.-built camp for Kosovar Albanian refugees. (left) A Marine aviation technician with the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), aboard the *U.S.S. Kearsarge* in the Adriatic Sea, checks to see if the weapon systems aboard this Cobra gunship are in working order before flight. (below) Marines with the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), in the Adriatic Sea as part of NATO's campaign against Yugoslavia, watch flight operations.



hours with the MEU were we able to be up on deck during take-offs. The reason: security. We live in a world where real-time, worldwide data and image transmission is only the push of a button. So the Marine Corps, like every other military force, doesn't want to give away its tactical advantage to the enemy until those weapons are exploding on the ground.

### A Real Shooting War

Although the AV-8s don't slam into the deck with the speed of Navy Tomcats — they actually return to ship using as little space as a large double-rotor helicopter — landings are still a pretty serious business. The aircraft, we reminded ourselves, weren't returning from some exercise. Rather, this was really a shooting war and

until each and every pilot returned safely to ship no one aboard could truly say they weren't worried.

One after another the AV-8s begin to circle around the *Kearsarge*. We could see some flight crew squinting their eyes, silently counting the arriving aircraft while looking up at the sky for "their" plane.

"Clear the deck," the Air Boss shouts. Everyone not involved in flight ops automatically stands aside, behind the red and white striped "out-of-bounds" line that runs the length of the deck. Fully outfitted in cranials, goggles and floatcoats, we watch as the Harriers drop onto the deck and quickly roll off to the side so the next aircraft can land safely.

None of the AV-8s returns to ship still carrying their weapons. It was a sign that

whatever mission they were given, clear weather prevailed and each pilot was able to complete his mission.

"No ground fire yet," an AV-8 pilot, who identified himself as Dale, told *SOF* in answer to our question whether he had taken SAM fire. "But that's when it's the most dangerous."

Another AV-8 pilot, who identified himself as "Speedy," told *SOF*, "I'm always worried about getting all of the things on my checklist done. Groundfire is only part of it."

When asked whether he was able to clearly see his targets and differentiate between Serb military units and Kosovar Albanian civilians, Dale said, "It's hard to tell when you're high and flying fast, but we take extreme caution when we launch."

As we talked with Dale, the last two AV-8s returned to deck, and between congratulations and backslapping from the crews, we continued to ask as much as we could about what it was like to fly CAP as part of NATO's first hot conflict in its 50-year history.

### Blind Fate

"I can't tell you what our targets were, but I can tell you that the aircraft performed as expected and that everyone returned to ship safely," Dale said.

"What about the AV-8?" we asked, noting that this was only the second time — the Gulf War being the first — that the aircraft has flown in combat for the U.S. military.

The AV-8 "isn't a downtown Belgrade type of plane," Dale explained. "We go after tactical targets. That means armor and artillery. That's what the aircraft is suited for, and the types of armaments we carry reflect that."

Forward of the ship's island, crews were readying two of the MEU's AH-1W Super Cobras for flight. The Army's Apache helicopters might garner more headlines and be the subject of more poster art, but ask any Marine aviator and he'll tell you that the Cobra is still one mean machine.

"Right now we're just riding shotgun for the CH-46s that shuttle back and forth between ship and shore," said a Cobra pilot who identified himself as Chad. "But we could find ourselves shooting at any time. We're constantly aware of our environment."

Another Cobra pilot, Kurt, said if and when the Marines do go ashore it would be the Cobras that would provide close air support against any hostile fire. "This helicopter and the weapons systems it employs are state-of-the-art and capable of putting a real hurting on whoever takes us on."



Marines with the 26 Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) learn how to use the Indoor Simulated Marksmanship Trainer (ISMAT). The computerized training facility is the first of its kind to be deployed aboard ship, and allows Marines to hone their marksmanship without having to fire live ammunition. (below) Marines with the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) 3/8 BLT Lima Company on patrol at Camp Hope, in southern Albania. The Marines are there to provide security at a U.S.-built camp for Kosovar Albanian refugees.



While no pilot *SOF* has ever spoken with likes to talk about it, being shot down or "flaming out" during combat ops is a very real and dangerous possibility that leaves most pilots with cold sweat on the back of their necks.

### "Bloodchits"

Images of dead U.S. Army pilots being dragged through the dusty streets of Mogadishu, Somalia, are never far

enough away when they fly over hostile territory, and every pilot carries with him a card — commonly known as a "bloodchit" — that tells anyone who finds him that "I am an American. Misfortune forces me to ask for your help" and offers a reward for his safe return.

Thankfully, as of press time, no U.S. pilots in this conflict have ever had to confront any armed capture party or civilians intent on taking him prisoner. Within hours of the downing of every U.S. aircraft over Yugoslavia — including the F-117A "Stealth" — a crack rescue team was on its way

to spirit the pilot to safety.

For all of the Marine aviators attached to the 26th MEU, that team is known as the Tactical Recovery of Aircraft and Personnel (TRAP).

"This is the unit that rescued [USAF] Captain Scott O'Grady in Bosnia," said Lieutenant Paul Merida, Oakland, Calif., TRAP platoon force commander. "We've got a 100 percent track record. We always get our man."

According to TRAP team's second-in-command, Sergeant Matt Hazard, the team spends more time planning missions than it does simulating them.

"What that means is," Sgt. Hazard told *SOF*, "we spend more time talking through the 'what ifs' and 'what happens if' than simulating rescues. We train for when a pilot or plane goes down. It's as simple as that. Over time we've developed specific units for each possibility. We've got units for land rescue, for water rescue, etc."

Lieutenant Merida said TRAP has two helicopters and crews at its disposal round-the-clock. "We could be off the ship in less

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(above) Giving new meaning to the term "going postal." (right) Marines with the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit enjoy a morning jog aboard their ship off the coast of Albania. The Pentagon has tasked the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit with multiple roles, ranging from providing security at refugee camps to providing close air support over Yugoslavia.



# SHOOT FAST, AND HIT TO WIN

## 1998 IDPA National Championships



Two years ago the International Defensive Pistol Association (IDPA) was formed as a new pistol shooting competition venue. IDPA's goal was to provide a competitive program in which actual real-life concealed-carry defensive handguns, worn daily in concealment holsters, could be used in scenarios that attempt to simulate the actual use of a sidearm by a law enforcement officer or armed citizen. The timing of this new sport was right on, as state after state enacted or modified "right to carry" laws, enabling private citizens to go armed legally. Now, these same armed citizens have a place to compete with their daily carry equipment,

under somewhat realistic conditions, both for fun and with some real world benefit, as well. The growth of IDPA has been phenomenal, growing in two years to 3,900 members and almost a hundred clubs throughout the country.

IDPA was founded by famous pistol-smith and former IPSC champion shooter, Bill Wilson. Wilson wanted to create a sport in which compensated, optically sighted, 21-shot "race guns" would not be necessary in order to compete effectively. Bill had done extremely well in IPSC competition, but over the past few years he has

become more and more interested in the use of the handgun in the real-life role of personal self-defense.

Bill persuaded a few others of like mind to join him in this new venture, and IDPA was on its way. IDPA is governed by a board of directors, led by Bill, and which includes several of the founding members of IPSC/USPSA who wanted to get back to the original roots of practical handgun competition. Noted tactical trainer and consultant Ken Hackathorn was one of the founders of IPSC at the historic Columbia Conference of 1977, along with Richard

**Text & Photos by Tom Givens**

Thomas. Both Ken and Dick serve on IDPA's board, along with USPSA founder John Sayle and noted author Walt Rauch. These men bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to IDPA and have shepherded the organization through its rapid initial growth.

Most of us wear our sidearms concealed in daily life, so that's the best way to test our shooting skills. The match designers and the crew of range officials provided a safe and rewarding set of challenges for the competitors.

IDPA competition is founded on the premise that winning should be determined by a shooter's skill at arms, not by his equipment budget. With this in mind, only minor gun modifications are allowed, holster selection is strictly controlled, and shooters compete in separate divisions, designed to pit shooters against other shooters with similar gear.

Revolver shooters, for instance, are not competing with everyone, only with the other revolver shooters. Thus, there is no



"We Interrupt This Program" began with author seated in an easychair in front of the TV when home invaders burst through the door. Sidearm was on the endtable until the start signal.



(opposite) Rob Leatham, Champion, Custom Defensive Pistol Division, fires from behind cover during Stage 13, "Double Feature." Shooting on the move, author charges a target (above) before engaging other targets while using the van for cover. (below) Revolvers are alive and well in IDPA. Texas pistolsmith Marc McCord fires his 3" barreled Model 27 .357 around a barricade.



overall winner in an IDPA match, but a winner in each of the four divisions. This levels the playing field and assures that the winner in each division is the best shooter, not the guy with the most advanced weaponry.

### Mizzou Slugfest

Last year, the second annual IDPA National Championship Match was conducted on 13 September 98, at the United Sportsman's Gun Club in Jefferson City, Mo. This prestigious match drew 203 of the finest defensive shooters in the country to slug it out for the national title in each of IDPA's four competitive divisions. A great facility, an imaginative and demanding selection of courses of fire, and a lot of fast, accurate shooting made this a memorable experience for all who came.

The match consisted of 14 stages, which required the shooter to display a wide range of shooting skills. There were courses which involved standard skill drills, plus a number of fast paced scenarios requiring shooters to move, use cover, reload under pressure, and even identify hostile targets among no-shoot targets, all with the ever-present timer urging them on. The stages were shot on the Vickers Count, a scoring system that factors in speed and accuracy, giving the best score to the shooter who could get center hits the quickest, just like in real life. A shooter's time for a string of shots is recorded, and there is a .5-second penalty added to his time for every point dropped on the target. Spraying or machine-gunning for speed causes excessive penalty time for points dropped. Shooting too slowly racks up too much raw time.

Shoot fast and hit the center to win.

Several of the stages in this match deserve mention for their creative use of



Beverly McCord, of Texas, was one of a dozen female competitors in the 1998 Championships. Here, she engages targets from behind cover in Stage 1 and (below), engages targets from inside a car — a real-world skill for real-world dangers. There is a growing interest among women in IDPA shooting throughout the U.S. (bottom) “Down but not out” stage required use of cover and shooting from prone, while engaging multiple adversaries scattered among no-shoot targets and vision barriers. Challenging!

range space and the challenges they posed to the shooters. Stage 1, for instance, was entitled “DEA Combat Course #11 (modified). The shooter started with his back to a huge array of targets, all of whom are wearing T-shirts to obscure the scoring rings and force the shooter to pick an aiming point the way he would have to in a confrontation. While the shooter had his back to the targets, a range official affixed realistic plastic guns to some, but not all, targets. On signal, shooter had to pivot and engage the first two “armed” targets he saw while running to a nearby barricade for cover. Once behind cover, the shooter had to continue to engage hostile targets as they were seen while using cover properly and “slicing the pie”, as to expose himself only to targets being engaged. This sort of course design ingrains good tactical habits and is representative of typical IDPA scenarios.



Stage 2, “A Long Drink at the Johnstown Bar,” started with the shooter seated on a barstool, hands on the bar. On signal, the shooter pivoted off the stool, drew, and engaged two nearby targets, while backing out of the bar. Shooting combined with movement was used in several stages, sometimes backing out of the danger zone as in this stage, or moving laterally or diagonally to cover.

“We Interrupt this Program” was the name given to Stage 6. Here, the shooter was seated in an easychair in front of a TV set, with pistol lying on an endtable by the chair. On signal, shooter picked up his pistol and engaged two clothed targets who were bursting through the door four and five yards away.

Stage 8, “Car-Jacked by Gang Members,” began with the shooter seated in a car, with another car parked a few yards to the front of the shooter’s car. On signal, the shooter had to draw and engage targets to the left of the car, then more targets to the front, by the second car. A reload was mandatory to engage all of the targets, and the stage was shot from concealment.

This type of stage exposes shooters to the real-world problems of safely presenting a weapon while seated in the car, shooting out the window at odd angles, and reloading in a cramped space with all of your gear under a jacket.

“Down, But Not Out” was an interesting stage that began with the shooter on the ground, with his pistol a few feet away. This simulated being knocked down and temporarily separated from one’s sidearm. On signal, the shooter had to retrieve his pistol and engage six targets scattered among “no-shoot” targets. The shooter was required to move, as some targets were obscured by barriers, and the shooter had to roll or crawl to cover, all firing being done from prone. This was quite a learning experience for many.

Stage 12 featured a motor driven target mounted on a rail at one end of an alley. As this target charged the shooter, the shooter

had to quickly back down the alley while firing shots into the charging madman. The target moved fairly quickly and it bobbed from side to side, making for a very challenging shot while the shooter hustled backward. This was a lot of fun and tested very useful skills.

Stage 13 was a scenario involving a gang attack outside a movie theater. The shooter had to move, use cover, reload behind cover, and sort out clothed hostile targets from bystanders. As mentioned, in this match most of the targets, hostile and non-hostile, were dressed in old T-shirts or sports shirts. This added realism and forced shooters to pick a proper aiming point instead of being guided by rings on the target. Ten of the 14 stages were shot from concealment, again adding realism and relevance to the competition.



Ernest Langdon, (above, left) of Beretta, who won top honors in the Stock Pistol Division, receives a trophy from Bill Wilson and board member John Sayle. (left) Bob Brown (second from left), Editor/Publisher of SOF — and sponsor of Stage 14 (the IDPA Quick-Skill Test) in the 1998 IDPA Championships — poses with match participants.



### And The Winners Are ...

The backbone of IDPA is the Stock Service Pistol Division. Stock Service Pistol is intended for shooters with double-action semiauto's like the S&W 5906, the Beretta M92, or the SIG P229 — DA guns in 9mm, .40 S&W, .38 Super, 9X23, etc., without extensive modifications or custom work. These are the guns carried daily by hundreds of thousands of cops and licensed civilians. The Stock Service Pistol Division was won by Ernest Langdon, a law enforcement sales representative for Beretta U.S.A., using a stock, out of the box Beretta

92, 9mm service pistol, with a score of 217.70. Second in this division was Rob Haught, a police chief from West Virginia, with a score of 222.11, using a Smith & Wesson 5906 9mm in Don Hume leather. Third place went to John Shaw, who used a SIG P226 9mm for a total time of 227.89.

The Stock Service Revolver Division is intended for competitors using standard revolvers like a Smith & Wesson Model 66 or 686, or the Colt Python. This year saw more revolver shooters than the previous year, with 17 wheelgunners going head to head. The champion in this division was

Alex Zimmerman, with a score of 260.60. Second was James Stout, at 282.09, and third was Michael Shovel at 310.57.

Shooters with single-action auto's in 9mm through .40 caliber compete in the Enhanced Service Pistol Division. These guns are typically Browning High Powers in 9mm or .40 S&W, or Government Model variants in .38 Super or .40 S&W. This was a well-populated and hotly contested division, with some really outstanding shooting done by the top hands. The ESP Division Champion was Special Agent Scott Warren, FBI, shooting a .40 caliber Government Model for a blazing score of 199.03. Scott was also the High Lawman of the championship.

Second was David Elderton, with a score of 214.79. Third place went to D.R. Middlebrooks, at 219.74. I had a couple of disastrous malfunctions with a new gun I acquired shortly before the match, and wound up fifth Master in this division.

The biggest division is Custom Defensive Pistol, the home of the 1911 .45ACP Government Model, in all its guises. Ninety-seven shooters fought it out in this division, shooting Colt, Springfield Armory, Wilson Combat, and Caspian pistols, to name a few.

The champion in Custom Defensive Pistol was professional shooter Rob Leatham, who scorched the course with a score of 192.23. Rob's effortless mastery of the pistol makes him a joy to watch as he mows down targets like a weedeater with his Springfield Armory Custom Shop .45, worn in a Safariland 5181 concealment holster.

## Equipment Used By Top Shooters At The 1998 IDPA Nationals

Name	Gun/Gunsmith	Holster
Rob Leatham	1911 .45, Springfield Custom Shop	Safariland 5181
Ken Hackathorn	1911 .45, Wilson CQB	BladeTech belt slide
Beverly McCord	1911.45, McCord	Bear's Den
Julie Nowlin	1911 .38 Super, Nowlin	Wilson Protector
Scott Warren	1911 .40 S&W, Springfield Custom	Wilson Rapid Resp.
Bill Wilson	1911.45, Wilson CQB	Wilson Tigershark
Ernie Langdon	Beretta 92G, 9mm	Hill Speed Holster
Tom Yost	S&W 945,.45, S&W Perf Center	Safariland 560
Rob Haught	S&W 5906 9mm	Don Hume

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# Featherweight Firepower

Don't kid yourself. Double-action revolvers are a long way from moribund. They still have their aficionados and lethal applications. I frequently carry a Smith & Wesson "J" frame revolver in one variant or another as backup to a larger pistol. They have several advantages. In the incredibly rare instance that a round fails to fire, just pulling the trigger will rotate another round into the firing position. Ammunition can be stored for a long, long time in a revolver's cylinder. A semiauto pistol's magazine follower spring will take a set if not periodically relieved of its ammunition load. For the novice, a revolver remains by far the best choice as there is never a chance of a round being left in the chamber after a magazine has been removed. And, there are usu-

ally no manual safety mechanisms that must be manipulated. Revolvers are less ammunition-sensitive than semiautos. Revolvers can be had in very small compact envelopes. And, for those who care (such as government-sanctioned covert operators), no brass is left on the ground to tell any tales.

Admittedly, there are disadvantages to wheel guns. For concealment purposes they are not as flat as semiauto pistols. Their capacity is almost always less than a semi-

Smith & Wesson's  
Wonder-Metal  
Wheel Guns

Text & Photos by  
Peter G. Hokal

automatic pistol. Revolvers are more difficult to reload than magazine-fed pistols. This later deficiency can loom with great importance in a gunfight. In spite of this, Smith & Wesson (Dept. SOF, 2100 Roosevelt Avenue, P.O. Box 2208, Springfield, MA 01102-2208; phone: 800-331-0852; fax: 413-747-3317; internet: <http://www.smith-wesson.com>) continues to market and sell a substantial number of revolvers designed for close encounters of the potentially deadly kind. The spate of concealed carry legislation throughout the country in recent years has increased the demand for reliable, small, lightweight, easily-concealed revolvers. Today, among armed professionals they most often see service as backups to heavier, large-caliber pistols or as so-called "kit guns" to backpackers, fishermen and campers. Smith & Wesson's remarkable new line of AirLite Ti revolvers address these very audiences, as well as those who want to carry only one very lightweight handgun.

Smith and Wesson has been making revolvers for more than 140 years. No one does it better. The Model 1 tip-up revolver appeared in the 1850s. The .38 Military and Police Model was introduced in 1899. For years the majority of Smith & Wesson's production was devoted to the .38 M&P, which during the 1950s became known as the Model 10. The Model 10 totally dominated the police market in the U.S. during that time frame, as did the .38 Special cartridge. Developed by Daniel B. Wesson to improve the anemic performance of the .38 Long Colt in the Philippines Campaign, the .38 Smith & Wesson Special (as it was initially called) is the most popular revolver cartridge of all time.

In 1950, the .38 Chiefs Special (Model 36), a small five-shot revolver was introduced, primarily intended for plainclothes dicks and off-duty police. In 1952, during Smith & Wesson's centennial year, they announced two pocket revolvers, each with a fully-concealed hammer — thus combining the salient features of the old Safety Model, introduced in 1887, with the newly designed J-frame series. Called the "Centennial" Models, the aluminum alloy-frame "Airweight" version (later called the Model 42) was the first to be produced. After the first 37 specimens were fabricated with aluminum-alloy cylinders (with a total weight of only 11.25 ounces), subsequent Centennial Airweights were equipped with steel cylinders and barrels, which increased their weight to 13 ounces. The all-steel version, known as the Model 40, followed shortly thereafter and weighed about 24 ounces. They were available with either a blued or nicked finish and were equipped with 2-inch barrels. The original Centennial revolvers were equipped with a grip-safety. In 1965, the Model 60, a stainless steel version of the Chiefs Special went into production series.

Production of the Centennial series ceased in 1976. By 1990 demand was so great that a stainless steel version, the Model

640, appeared, sans a grip safety, and additional Centennial and even exposed-hammer J-frame revolvers have been introduced with substantial frequency and great success.

After more than a year of development, the startling AirLite Model 317 was introduced in 1997. Chambered for the .22 LR cartridge, this eight-shot, J-frame, short-barreled revolver has an aluminum frame, cylinder and barrel shroud with a stainless steel barrel and other weight-reducing features. It weighs, empty, less than 10 ounces. While this is astounding, the caliber has little appeal to armed professionals.

### Titanium To The Rescue

That single deficiency has been corrected by Smith & Wesson's even more astounding new AirLite Ti revolver series, which introduce the use of a substantial amount of titanium and more formidable calibers. There are six revolvers in this series. Two are chambered for the ubiquitous .38 Special +P round: the concealed-hammer, Centennial-style Model 342 and the exposed-hammer Model 337. For those whose sensibilities might be ruffled by stiff recoil, there are also two models chambered for the more pleasant, but less effective, .32 H&R Magnum cartridge: the concealed-hammer Model 332 and the exposed-hammer Model 331. Both of the .32 H&R Magnum revolvers have milled-in front sights. All four of these latter revolvers are J-frames. Even more interesting to me are two new concealed-hammer L-frame AirLite Ti handguns. The Model 242 is a seven-shot .38 Special +P handgun. But, of greatest attraction to pistoleros will undoubtedly be the exciting new Model 296, a five-shot revolver chambered for the great .44 Special round.

*Soldier Of Fortune* was recently sent a Model 337 exposed-hammer .38 Special +P J-frame handgun and a Model 296 con-

cealed-hammer .44 Special L-frame for test and evaluation. Obviously the single-most salient feature of the AirLite Ti series is the weight. The Model 337 weighs only 11.4 ounces, empty. It has a 1 7/8-inch barrel and an overall length of 6.4 inches. The five-groove bore has a right-hand twist with one turn in 18.75 inches. Our test specimen is equipped with attractive uncheckered, wood laminate grip panels. Featuring coil-spring ignition with a floating firing pin, the double-action trigger-pull weight is 11.0 pounds. Single-action trigger-pull weight is a very crisp 3.25 pounds, although handguns of this type should almost always be fired under stress in double-action. Cylinder-to-forcing-cone gap is 0.006-inch. The industry's generally accepted tolerance range for this dimension is 0.003 to 0.008-inch. Both lateral and fore-and-aft cylinder play are minimal.

The .44 Special Model 296 weighs 18.8 ounces, empty. It has a 2.5-inch barrel and an overall length of 7.4 inches. This five-groove barrel has a right-hand twist with one turn in 20 inches. The checkered, black, soft synthetic grip panels do an excellent job of taming the rather stiff recoil. Employing leaf-spring ignition (also with a floating firing pin), double-action trigger-pull weight of the Model 296 AirLite Ti is a superb 9.5 pounds. Cylinder-to-forcing-cone gap is 0.007-inch. Again, both lateral and fore-and-aft cylinder play are minimal.

Smith & Wesson's L-frame series was developed after U.S. law enforcement agencies abandoned the .38 Special cartridge in favor of the .357 Magnum in service-size revolvers. Subsequently, the police training cycles on these handguns became more aggressive. On S&W K-frame revolvers, in order to make room for the gas ring in front of the cylinder, metal must be machined off the forcing cone at the end of the barrel. As more and more rounds were fired in training,



Employing sophisticated titanium technology, Smith & Wesson's AirLite Ti revolvers provide toughness and reliability in an incredibly lightweight package.



Five beans in the wheel: Both the .44 Special Model 296 and .38 Special Model 337 AirLite Ti revolvers have five-shot cylinders. (above, right) Note lightening "rain gutter" running around the periphery of the trigger guard. Groove on the back of the trigger is not a lightening cut but a function of its manufacture by the MIM process. (right) The steel, serrated ramp-type front sight blade has a black oxide finish which provides high visibility and is held to the barrel shroud by a roll pin.

this machined area became a weak point. To achieve the required clearance without having to machine material off the forcing cone, the bore's axis was moved up. This resulted in the taller frame of the "L" series. While use of a large caliber, such as the .44 Special in the Model 296, doesn't permit much material in the forcing cone, the L-frame has a more robust forcing cone than any S&W frame, with the exception of the N-frame.

Both the frame and barrel shroud of the AirLite Ti series are manufactured from 7075 aluminum alloy in aircraft-grade T6. The frame itself is CNC (Computer Numerical Controlled) machined from a forging.

The most important and obvious titanium component is the cylinder, which is

machined from barstock. Both the firing pin bushing and the center pin bushing on the bolster face are made of titanium, principally because of the material's resiliency. Because of its toughness, all of the frame studs (for the hammer, trigger, rebound slide and cylinder stop) are also made of titanium.

### Less Is More

Lightening the AirLite Ti revolvers was not simply a matter of using titanium components. Far more was involved. "Rain gutters" running around the periphery of the trigger guard and on both the front and back straps serve as lightening grooves to reduce weight. Additionally, internally under the side plate a number of mill cuts were made to

remove material deemed unnecessary. Under the grip panels there are alterations to the frame's cross webbing. The cylinder yoke itself has been made of weight-saving aluminum. There are also subtle touches, not readily noticed. For example, the cylinder flutes are longer and tapered to remove more metal. All of these changes commenced with the AirLite Model 317 .22 LR revolver.

The barrel and shroud system, however, departs radically from that of the Model

Titanium is a lustrous, silver-white metallic element in Group IV B of the Periodic Table. Titanium (symbol: Ti) has an atomic number of 22 and an atomic weight of 47.90 with a melting point of 1800 degrees C.

Its principal sources are the minerals Ilmenite and Rutile. Ilmenite is titanic iron ore found as beds and lenticular bodies enveloped in gneiss and other crystalline metamorphic rocks. Rutile, a titanium dioxide, is found in granite, granite pegmatites, gneiss, mica schist, metamorphic limestone, and dolomite.

## Why Titanium?

Titanium's chemistry shows similarities to that of both zirconium and silicon. Its various compounds have a wide range of commercial importance. Titanium dioxide is used as a white paint pigment. Barium titanite is piezoelectric and is used as a sound and electrical transducer. Titanium tetrachloride is used for smoke screens and in skywriting. Titanium esters are employed as waterproofing chemicals for fabrics.

Because of its high strength-to-weight ratio titanium metal has been long favored in the aerospace industry for the construction of both frames and engines. These properties of both light mass with correspondingly very high tensile strength, even at high temperatures, are what attracted Smith & Wesson's designers. Furthermore,

titanium has a much higher "modulus of elasticity" (the property of returning to an initial state without rupture after deformation) than steel — an important property because of the sudden and very high pressure peaks associated with the ignition of small arms ammunition. And, rightly or wrongly, those who carry concealed weaponry most often desire as light a handgun as possible.

However, although it's one of the earth's most common elements, titanium is difficult to refine. Titanium metal cannot be produced by the usual dioxide reduction method, as it reacts with both oxygen and nitrogen at high temperatures. Most often, titanium is extracted by passing chlorine over the ore. The titanium tetrachloride that results is condensed, purified by fractional distillation and then reduced with molten magnesium at high temperature in an atmosphere of argon. This is an expensive operation, with the result that titanium barstock costs 10 times as much as the stainless steel Smith & Wesson uses in its revolvers.

Using CNC machinery run at proper speeds for this new material, and titanium alloy of the correct type, Smith & Wesson's engineers can successfully create AirLite Ti components from a material that can be extremely difficult to machine. Were it not for the sophisticated CNC machinery that Smith & Wesson installed several years ago, the AirLite Ti project would not have been feasible. In addition, selecting the titanium alloy that would withstand the brief, but extremely high pressures generated by the ignition of a center-fire handgun cartridge inside the cylinder was a major project itself. AirLite Ti cylinders are strong — probably much stronger than they will ever need to be.

— P.G.K.

317. The engineering challenge to reduce weight without compromising controllability or reliability applied to the barrel as well, but there was, in this area, a secondary focus. At Smith & Wesson, the traditional method of mating a revolver barrel to the frame is called "clocking the barrel." The threads at the butt end of the barrel must always start at a single, precise point so that when the barrel is turned into the frame the front sight aligns correctly and there is the proper interference fit. This "crush" fit will cause some minute (only 10 thousandths) distortion to the interior bore surface. Sometimes this can be seen, but it has no affect of any kind on the revolver's performance or accuracy potential.

With the barrel system employed on the S&W AirLite Ti series, the sight alignment is determined by the metal tab on the front of the frame and its corresponding recess on the back of the barrel shroud. Both of these



A cross pin at the bottom of the backstrap, a characteristic of all the AirLite series, is provided to attach a lanyard. Note lightening "rain gutter" on the backstrap. (below) L-frame M296 has leaf-spring ignition which provides a double-action pull weight of only 9.5 pounds. M337 features coil-spring ignition, which is conventional for the J-frame series.



# 44 Special: History and Performance

We must thank Smith & Wesson for the great .44 Special cartridge. At its inception, the Smith & Wesson Model 3 American First Model break-top revolver was chambered for the .44 Henry rimfire cartridge. At the behest of the U.S. Army Ordnance Board, the caliber was changed to centerfire. It was called the .44/100, or more commonly, the .44 Smith & Wesson American. Although it was still manufactured up to 1939, only one other revolver, the .44 Merwin Hulbert, was ever chambered for it. Most of the bullets were solid lead, round nose and heel type (that portion of the bullet projecting beyond the case is the same diameter as the outer diameter of the case). Projectile weights varied from 190 to 225 grains. The latter was the official U.S. Government type.

The .44 Smith & Wesson Russian cartridge and the revolver for which it was designed were both a consequence of modifications to the .44 Smith & Wesson American cartridge and its revolver. In 1870 the Czar of Russia instructed Smith & Wesson to commence production of 200,000 revolvers similar to the "American" type, but with exterior changes and alterations in the bore and chamber specifications. The heel-type bullet was replaced with a projectile having the same diameter as the inside of the case. This required counter-boring the rear of the cylinder. Bullet weight was increased to 246 grains. Velocity increased by 100 fps and the accuracy was greatly improved. Muzzle velocity was 770 fps. Gratefully, this fine round is now available from Black Hills Ammunition in response to its popularity among those involved in Cowboy Action Shooting competition.

In 1907, Smith & Wesson introduced the .44 "New Century Model" revolver. It was chambered for a new round intended to improve upon the .44 Smith & Wesson Russian. Still depending upon black powder, the case was lengthened to provide for three more grains (for a total charge weight of 26 grains). The 246-grain bullet was retained. The desired gain in velocity was achieved. However, with the introduction of smokeless propellants, the muzzle velocity of both rounds was established at 770 fps.

What became known as simply the .44 Special cartridge was both accurate and powerful, although it never reached its full potential with factory loadings. It remained for Elmer Keith and others to bring the .44 Special into prominence. Prior to the introduction of the .44 Magnum, from which it was derived, Keith considered the .44 Special to be the best of all revolver cartridges. To Keith, it was the most accurate revolver round in existence, and when handloaded properly, the most powerful. With modern Jacketed Hollow Point (JHP) bullets, weighing about 200 grains and designed to expand at moderate velocities (such as the Speer Gold Dot), the .44 Special remains a superb choice for those who fight with a wheel gun. Remember, once we've achieved the desired penetration in living tissue, bullets that make big holes do more damage. Smith & Wesson's new Model 296 AirLite Ti will carry the .44 Special well past the millennium. — P.G.K.



**.44 Special: the best and most accurate of all revolver cartridges.**

tolerances are easier to control than the precise location the threads commence at the end of the barrel. The stainless steel barrel tube must only be removed and installed by a special Smith & Wesson armorer's tool, which, in essence, is the mirror image of the bore. Reinstallation of the barrel requires it to be torqued to 20 ft/lbs. After firing the revolver, it will require 40 ft/lbs. of torque to remove the barrel, thus demonstrating its tendency to self-tighten during firing. This operation should be performed by competent gunsmiths using the proper tool only.

Some writers for the popular gun press have suggested that the groove on the back of the AirLite (Ti) series triggers is a lightening cut. This is not true. This component has been made by the ever more common Metal Injection Molding (MIM) process. This involves the injection of a metal and wax slurry which produces a "green part" that is about 30% larger than the final result will be. This is placed in a sintering furnace, which drives off the wax and fuses the sintered metal to the desired configuration and size. The cross-section of parts made by this

process must be held to a certain dimension. If too thick, sintering will set up differential shrinking. The component will then exhibit "sinks," indentations dimpling inward. The groove at the back of the trigger merely reduces the trigger's cross-section to prevent the appearance of sinks.

The five-shot titanium cylinders of both the Models 337 and 296 rotate to the left, or counterclockwise (as with all S&W revolvers). Who cares? You had better care. In a gunfight, five rounds may not be enough and you may have time to load only another one or two rounds. You must know precisely where to align the cylinder so that after you close it, pulling the trigger will rotate a live round into the firing position.

The abbreviated ejector rod on these short-barreled revolvers does not permit complete ejection of the empty cases. So, program yourself to claw them out with your support hand as quickly as possible with the revolver held high, but just below your line of sight, and your eyes constantly on the target.

The cylinder latch thumbpiece on Smith & Wesson revolvers was ergonomically redesigned about four or five years ago and is now of the so-called "speed"-type. Unlike Colts, S&W cylinder latch thumbpieces must be pushed forward to swing out the cylinder.

A cross pin at the bottom of the backstrap, a characteristic of all the AirLite series, is provided to attach a lanyard. In my opinion, handguns should be attached to the body by means of a holster — whether it be a belt, ankle, shoulder, pocket or inside-the-waistband type — so that they will be found in exactly the same place each and every time the weapon is presented. Pulling on a lanyard to retrieve a handgun in your pocket or around your neck is an improper han-

dling procedure that could prove disastrous in a gunfight.

The sight system is simple and appropriate for the projected use of short-barreled revolvers. The rear sight consists of a large open square-notch cut into the frame's top strap at the rear end and measuring a nominal 0.130-inch in width. The long, serrated ramp-type front sight blade measures 0.125-inch in thickness. It is held to the barrel shroud by a roll pin. The steel front sight blade has a black oxide finish which provides high visibility. Sight radius is 3.6 inches for the J-frame Model 337 and 4.1 inches for the larger L-frame Model 296.

All of our testing of the Smith & Wesson AirLite Ti series was conducted at a range of 7 yards. The vast majority of gunfights involving handguns occur at this range and less. We fired the .44 Special Model 296 with 200-grain Jacketed Hollow Points provided by Black Hills Ammunition (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 3090, Rapid City, SD 57709-3090; phone: 605-348-5150; fax: 605-348-9827 — call for information about purchasing direct at retail if there is no Black Hills distributor near you). This is the projectile weight recommended by Smith & Wesson and so marked on the barrel shroud. These excellent Speer Gold Dot Jacketed Hollow Point (JHP) bullets will shoot directly to the point of aim, as the sights were regulated for this bullet weight. Muzzle velocity of this load is about 775 fps from the Model 296's 2.5-inch barrel. This is fast enough for adequate expansion in soft tissue. Modern hollow point bullets, manufactured by Speer, Hornady, Winchester or Federal, are designed to expand reliably at moderate velocities.

### Light & Low, Heavy & High

Remember, lighter bullets will almost

invariably shoot to a lower point of impact in revolvers than heavier bullets, *irrespective* of their propellant charge weights or velocities. This is hard for some to believe, but high-velocity and low-velocity loads with the same projectile weight will invariably shoot to nearly the same point of impact. However, changing the bullet weight will *always* cause a change in the point of impact no matter what the velocity.

To demonstrate this phenomenon we fired a wide range of projectile weights in the AirLite Ti Model 337 .38 Special revolver. Smith & Wesson advises that only +P Jacketed bullets should be used, as the crimp on lead projectiles of the +P type (such as the famous 158-grain lead hollow point "FBI" load) is insufficient to prevent bullets from jumping forward during recoil and preventing the cylinder from rotating. The Model 337 has been calibrated for the point of impact to equal the point of aim with 158-grain bullets and we found this to be so. Black Hills +P .38 Special ammunition with the Speer Gold Dot 125-grain JHP bullet, traveling about 780 fps, shot about 2 inches below the point of aim, as did the lower velocity 125-grain Federal Nyclad hollow point.

Before Dr. Martin L. Fackler developed the principles of modern wound ballistics research, lightweight, high-velocity 110-grain hollowpoints briefly held sway. Digging into my pile of .38 Special esoterica, I located some Smith & Wesson (actually manufactured by Fioocchi in Alton, Ill.) 110-grain JHP rounds and some ultra-high-velocity Super Vel Police 110-grain Jacketed Soft Points. Both shot about 6 inches below the point of aim. PMC's 66-grain tubular bullet (no longer available), which exhibited sticky extraction and primer flowing (indi-



A trio of Smith & Wesson .44 Specials (from top to bottom): N-frame stainless steel M624 with 3-inch barrel, round butt and Skeeter Skelton style grip panels; L-frame stainless steel M696, also with 3-inch barrel and new AirLite Ti with 2.5-inch barrel.

## S&W M337 AirLite Ti

### S P E C I F I C A T I O N S

**Caliber:** .38 Special +P.

**Operation:** Five-shot revolver. Exposed-hammer, single- and double-action. Coil-spring ignition with floating firing pin.

**Weight, empty:** 11.4 ounces.

**Length, overall:** 6.4 inches.

**Barrel:** Five-groove with a right-hand twist of one turn in 18.75 inches. Stainless steel barrel tube with aluminum shroud.

**Barrel length:** 1½ inches.

**Grips:** Soft black synthetic or wood laminate.

**Sights:** Fixed; black oxide, serrated-ramp front sight blade, 0.125-inch wide, roll-pinned to barrel shroud; open, square-notch rear sight, 0.130-inch in width, milled into the rear end of the top strap. Sight radius: 3.6 inches.

**Construction and finish:** Treated dark gray titanium cylinder, light gray aluminum frame and barrel shroud, and color case-hardened steel trigger and hammer.

**Suggested retail price:** \$624 with soft synthetic grip panels; add \$24 for wood laminate grips.

**Manufacturer:** Smith & Wesson, Dept. SOF, 2100 Roosevelt Avenue, P.O. Box 2208, Springfield, MA 01102-2208; phone: 800-331-0852; fax: 413-747-3317; internet: <http://www.smith-wesson.com>.

**T&E summary:** Incredibly lightweight concealed-carry revolver made possible by titanium technology. Tough and reliable. Stiff recoil with +P loads. Effective performance with modern jacketed hollowpoints at moderate velocities.

# Milt Sparks *Holsters*

Revolvers like the superb new Smith & Wesson AirLite Ti series deserve the best possible leather. There are no more than a handful of truly great holster makers. Tony Kanaley of Milt Sparks Holsters, Inc. (Dept. SOF, 605 East 44th, #2, Boise, Idaho 83714; phone: 208-377-5577; fax: 208-376-7386; catalog \$5) is one of them.

For the larger S&W Model 296 AirLite Ti .44 Special concealed-hammer revolver SOF selected Tony's PMK-C revolver holster which positions the handgun lower on the belt than most hide-ride holsters. The rear belt slot and tunnel loop at the rear work to pull the piece in tight against the body for maximum concealment. A flat steel insert serves as a mouth reinforcement without enlarging the profile. I chose a natural tan, pebble grain finish that is available at no extra cost and is embossed by the tannery. Black or cordovan colors are also available.

The PMK-C model is the muzzle forward option and I prefer crossdraw. A crossdraw position permits the support hand to sweep aside the concealing jacket or coat without fumbling and, equally important, the shooter does not telegraph his draw stroke to potential threats on the flanks or to the rear.

The PMK-C holster costs \$75. We com-

plemented this with a 1.5-inch belt for \$50. All Milt Sparks gun belts are cut on a contour for comfort and fit.

The S&W Model 337 AirLite Ti .38 Special +P revolver is most definitely a backup gun that will in most cases be carried in deep concealment. Our choice for a holster was the excellent Milt Sparks PCH-R pocket concealment holster. The PCH-R positions the revolver near the pocket's centerline, providing a thin-edge profile from front to rear. The unformed outer shell blocks the revolver's outline, while light detail molding on the holster's inside face reduces bulk. An innovative muzzle cutout on the inside face permits the barrel to protrude and further reduces the holster's mass. A malleable copper wire insert has been laminated into the perimeter of the holster. This permits an individualized custom fit and enables the user to shape and mold the outer edge to maximize concealment. This unique holster costs \$50 and is available in black or tan.

To purchase revolvers as expensive as the new Smith & Wesson AirLite Ti series and then slap them into the cheapest rig available is a poor decision. All of the components in a concealed carry system should meet the same levels of quality and performance. — P.G.K.



cations of extremely high pressure), shot 10 inches below the point of aim.

You don't need +P ammunition for effective wound ballistics performance with the .38 Special cartridge. Use standard velocity ammunition with modern 158-grain JHP bullets. Bullets like this will expand to almost .60 caliber in soft tissue

and penetrate to about 13 inches, even at moderate velocities. This is adequate and with modern, expanding hollow points, the .38 Special remains an excellent choice for those who carry small concealed handguns.

The 11.4-ounce Model 337 kicks hard with +P ammunition, although it's nothing an experienced operator can't handle. However,

be advised that this revolver was not built for plinking. While recoil is sharp with the .44 Special Model 296 as well, it is noticeably less than that of the J-frame revolver. Both revolvers possess more than adequate accuracy for small, lightweight hideouts. Our Model 296 will place a full cylinder into one jagged hole at 7 yards — in this instance a commentary not only on Smith & Wesson's handiwork but the .44 Special cartridge's superb accuracy potential.

I purchased my first Smith & Wesson revolver in 1954. It was a .38 Special K-frame "Combat Masterpiece" with a 4-inch barrel. Shortly thereafter, I traded up to a .357 Magnum Highway Patrolman N-frame. I now own over 40 S&W wheel guns, with no end in sight. The new AirLite Ti series is a spectacular engineering achievement that successfully addresses a perceived need by those who pack pistols on a daily basis. The Model 337 carries a suggested retail price of \$624 with soft synthetic grip panels — add \$24 for wood laminate grips. My personal favorite is the Model 296 and it will set you back \$658 (available with synthetic grips only).

Look for the AirLite Ti series to be expanded in the future. Real possibilities include a M296 exposed-hammer revolver with fixed sights and a 2.5-inch, as well as a version with a 3-inch barrel and adjustable sights. Expect also a 3-inch barreled "kit gun" format for the .38 Special and .32 H&R Magnum J-frames. Eventually, there may even be an AirLite Ti chambered for a true magnum, such as the .41 Mag. ❧

## S&W M296 AirLite Ti

### S P E C I F I C A T I O N S

**Caliber:** .44 Special.

**Operation:** Five-shot revolver. Concealed-hammer, double action-only. Leaf-spring ignition with floating firing pin.

**Weight, empty:** 18.8 ounces.

**Length, overall:** 7.4 inches.

**Barrel:** Five-groove with a right-hand twist of one turn in 20 inches. Stainless steel barrel tube with aluminum shroud.

**Barrel length:** 2.5 inches.

**Grips:** Soft black synthetic.

**Sights:** Fixed: black oxide, serrated-ramp front sight blade, 0.125-inch wide, roll-pinned to barrel shroud; open, square-notch rear sight, 0.130-inch in width, milled into the rear end of the top strap. Sight radius: 4.1 inches.

**Construction and finish:** Treated dark gray titanium cylinder, light gray aluminum frame and barrel shroud, and color case-hardened steel trigger.

**Suggested retail price:** \$658.

**Manufacturer:** Smith & Wesson, Dept. SOF, 2100 Roosevelt Avenue, P.O. Box 2208, Springfield, MA 01102-2208; phone: 800-331-0852; fax: 413-747-3317; internet: <http://www.smith-wesson.com>.

**T&E summary:** Lightweight titanium technology. Tough and reliable. Moderate recoil only. Point-of-impact equals point-of-aim with 200-grain bullets. Chambered for the best and most accurate of all revolver cartridges.

# Computer Crash Scenario

*Editor's Note: If someone tells you he knows exactly what will happen after the clock strikes midnight on 31 December 1999, put your hand on your wallet. Nobody knows for sure, including Soldier Of Fortune magazine. At SOF, however, we always encourage readers to live as independently as possible, so as to remain standing should society collapse around us. The following is an excerpt from the book Y2K Computer Crash Scenario: What to Expect and How to Protect Your Assets, Your Credit, and Your Way of Life. Written by Dr. John Mrozek, M.D., the book is published by Paladin Press and can be ordered by calling 1-800-392-2400; or by visiting [www.paladin-press.com](http://www.paladin-press.com).*

**T**he birth of the problem that will cause the collapse of our communication and information systems was uneventful. When computer programs were first written, the cost of each symbol or digit was high. The need to economize on program size was a major concern to those who used this new technology. For that reason, and out of sheer laziness, most programmers in the world adopted the practice of abbreviating the year. Instead of writing 1959, the program-

mer would write 59. This practice, used by school children everyday, seemed like a reasonable one at the time. No one writing computer programs back then gave much thought to what effect the change from 1999 to 2000 would have on the computer systems that were programmed using this industry-wide practice.

The problem began to come to light slowly and in curious ways. Various government agencies in America started to have problems when people born before

## A Hedge Against the Threat: What one man is doing

It's no surprise that many of our loyal readers have made at least some reasonable preparation for the disaster that might occur at the start of the new millennium. We spoke with Vernon Filmor, a successful, conservative investor in the Northwest, about his views on Y2K.

**SOF:** *Why would a conservative businessman like you get caught up in all the hype about Y2K?*

**Filmor:** About a year ago, I came across a copy of *Time Bomb 2000* in a bookstore. In it, a computer guru lays out and attempts to determine the magnitude of the problem. Yourdon spells out three scenarios, short, medium and long term, leaving the reader to choose. Of course, how you prepare for one month varies greatly with how one prepares for 10 years.

**SOF:** *So you think Y2K is something we should all be concerned about?*

**Filmor:** The difference between Y2K and other disasters is that all the others are random — one doesn't know where they will strike or when. Y2K is time-certain. And it spreads everywhere — private and public sectors, worldwide. Now the time-certain feature has given warning to everyone so that steps can be taken to fix the problem.

**SOF:** *How complex or big is the problem?*

**Filmor:** I've been told it's very simple. But the scale is

immense. Programmers, especially on older mainframe computers, must read each line of code and correct it. Then the program must be tested and then other errors pop up and they must be corrected. A time-consuming and costly process. One party says it's like taking a cigar box of marbles and polishing each one. Simple. Except the marbles fill up the Grand Canyon.

**SOF:** *But will it last, as the worst case Yourdon suggests — 10 years?*

**Filmor:** There are several persons who have played up potential crises in the past. Remember when the Russians were going to invade the U.S. by sending troops in through Mexico? And the AIDS problem was going to overrun the country in the '80s? The same people are touting Y2K the same way.

**SOF:** *Like crying wolf?*

**Filmor:** Precisely, but this time they could be right.

**SOF:** *So, what steps have you taken to prepare yourself for Y2K?*

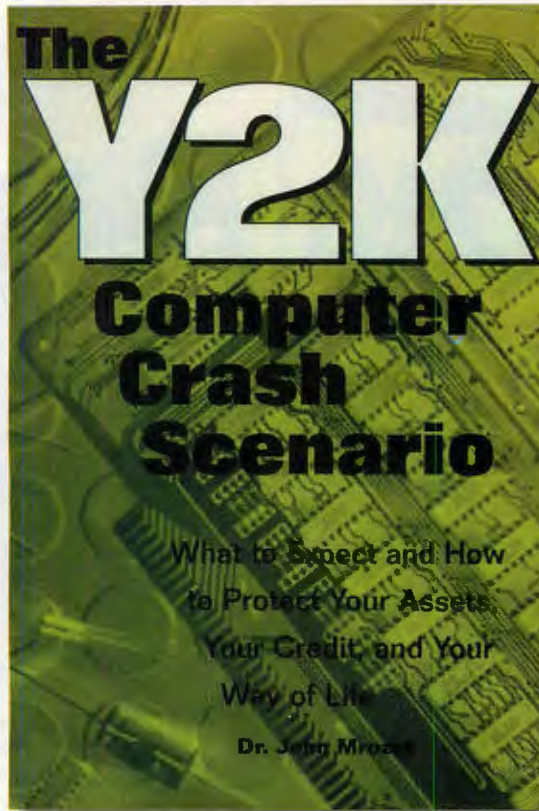
**Filmor:** Being prepared is like buying insurance for your car or house. You pay premiums every year hoping that your house doesn't catch fire or that you don't get into an accident. And being from the Northwest, where we just came off Ice Storm '96, where many people were without electricity for up to two weeks, it makes sense to be prepared for emergencies. So I've stocked up on food

"I truly hope that various government agencies and international corporations will be able to stop such a crash on the day that marks the beginning of the new millennium. If not, we face a number of potential problems." — *Dr. John Mrozek*

1900 who were collecting government benefits surpassed the century mark. For example, take the case of a man born in 1887 who was happily collecting his Social Security check until January 1987. All of the sudden, the man received notice that he was ineligible for pension benefits because he was "less than a year old." These cases were laughed off initially because the number of people over 100 years old was small, and the problem was easy to fix on a case-by-case basis.

Unfortunately, the government focused on fixing the smaller problem at hand instead of seeing the larger problem it will face when we hit the year 2000 and every beneficiary is rejected. Many people in government and industry will tell you that this problem only affects older computer programs and can be fixed easily. After all, it is in the government's and industry's best interest to avoid causing panic while they slowly employ the measures to fix the problem.

But the practice of using this shorthand method of writing the year



has only recently been modified in some programming circles. Even more ominous are the so-called piggy-back effects that have the ability to interfere with transactions controlled by the newest software, which does not contain the two-digit year abbreviation.

### Piggyback Effect

Let me start out by explaining the piggyback effect. Let's take the example of writing out a will. Assume that you have been very successful in life and want to make sure your assets are passed on the way that you have chosen. You consult an attorney who discusses your wishes with you and draws up a will. Do you think the attorney starts to write your will from scratch? Of course not. He would be foolish to do so. Instead, he begins with a will written many years ago and tested many times in court that he knows will get the desired effect and then he modifies it to fit your individual needs. This is referred to as using boilerplate language, and it is a very prudent way for attorneys to conduct business.

that I tend to eat anyway, have several barrels of water, distillation unit and filter, a diesel generator and fuel for potential use for about a month and several cords of wood. I have collected a month's supply of vitamins and other supplements.

**SOF:** *Guns?*

**Filmor:** I live in a small town and therefore am not as concerned about civil unrest as I might be. But I do have a .357 revolver, 12-gauge shotgun and will procure a rifle soon. Plus sufficient rounds.

**SOF:** *What about the banks?*

**Filmor:** From what I have read over the Internet and what have you, most banks will be compliant. The problem is a 1930s run on the banks. *USA Today* had a survey that showed 80% of the people will leave their money in the bank and that figure was used to show that everything would be all right. Yeah. If 5% pull their money out of the bank at one time, there could be a serious problem. That's why the government has said they had printed more money to be used in case of a run. Now, the 80% who said they would leave their money in the bank probably live paycheck to paycheck and therefore won't have an impact.

**SOF:** *So what's your best guess?*

**Filmor:** Looking in my crystal ball, maybe one to two months of disruptions in the normal flow of business activities — some food shortages, some utility disruptions, some civil unrest. My major concern is a business recession. That could be the real problem.

**SOF:** *When did you first become interested in preparedness?*

**Filmor:** I first became aware of preparedness back in 1979, when Gary North said the Russians were going to invade from Mexico up into the Northwest. Later, in 1980, he said there would be a worldwide epidemic of AIDS. Then started warning about economic and social disruption regarding Y2K. Who knows? This time he might be right.

**SOF:** *The last credible threat was Russia, and it looks like they're not coming. Why your interest in another potential threat?*

**Filmor:** Because Y2K is a very definite time period where something might happen, whereas all these other things were figments of someone's imagination. This is time certain, and it seems to have more validity.

**SOF:** *Do you perceive the Y2K threat of chaos to be from actual technical problems, or from public over-reaction to perceived problems?*

**Filmor:** They both kind of play into each other. If nothing happens on the technological side, and yet the public feels something is going to happen, then it may well be a self-fulfilling prophecy.

**SOF:** *What have you done to prepare long term, should Y2K turn out to be a 10-year ordeal?*

**Filmor:** There are some things you just can't reasonably plan for. You can't go out and buy 10 years of food, and fuel and heat. You can only plan for so long and then if the problem persists, everyone's in the same boat, and then so what?

**SOF:** *What do you think the government should be doing that they are not?*

**Filmor:** I don't know. I do know that the general population has a problem believing anything the government says these days, and that's where I'm at. I don't know what they're doing, and I can't believe anything they say they are doing.

**SOF:** *What financial preparations are you taking?*

**Filmor:** I'm withdrawing my cash and buying gold.

**SOF:** *Have you attended preparedness expos?*

**Filmor:** One. They were selling all the same shit they were selling back in 1979 when the Russians were coming. It's all just a little fancier now.



Computer programmers do the same thing in many circumstances. If, in the course of writing a given program, they need a certain common function done, they do not reinvent the wheel. Instead, they take a program that is proven to perform the given functions and use it in their own programs, just as the attorney uses certain language from his boilerplate will. Unfortunately most of the proven programs that have been "piggy-backed" into newer programs are old — dating back to the period when using the two-digit year abbreviation was standard procedure for programmers. Thus, even newer programs have this error incorporated into the many lines of their new computer software.

The second problem is networking. Most large computer systems, including those used by the government, large corporations and financial institutions, function by having different computers "talk" to each other. If a complex transaction requires this interfacing among different computers, it takes only a two-digit year abbreviation error in one of the computers to cause the transaction to crash.

### Language Barrier

Suffice it to say that security systems set up to prevent virus insertion and hacker access could be compromised either through a two-digit year abbreviation error in the security software itself or because of a piggyback or networking error. You may see the problem as a simple one to fix. After all, how difficult could it be to change 59 to 1959 and get on with our lives? Unfortunately, it's not that easy. For one thing, computer languages like Cobal, that were used decades ago, have not only fallen into disuse, but they are not even understood by many modern programmers.

Imagine that you had a disagreement with your neighbor and wanted to work things out. A simple proposition, right? Now suppose that your neighbor spoke only Latin or ancient Greek, two languages that few people speak anymore. Would that make your problem with your neighbor more difficult to resolve? You bet it would. If you were lucky, you might find a professor of ancient languages at some university to help you. It's necessary to follow a similar process in the computer world. Old programmers who wrote programs in Cobal are being pulled out of retirement to help fix the problem. Sounds like

the problem is fixable, right? Guess again. There is a limited number of these people available, and they must check each program out line by line. And bear in mind that we are talking about trillions of lines of programming.

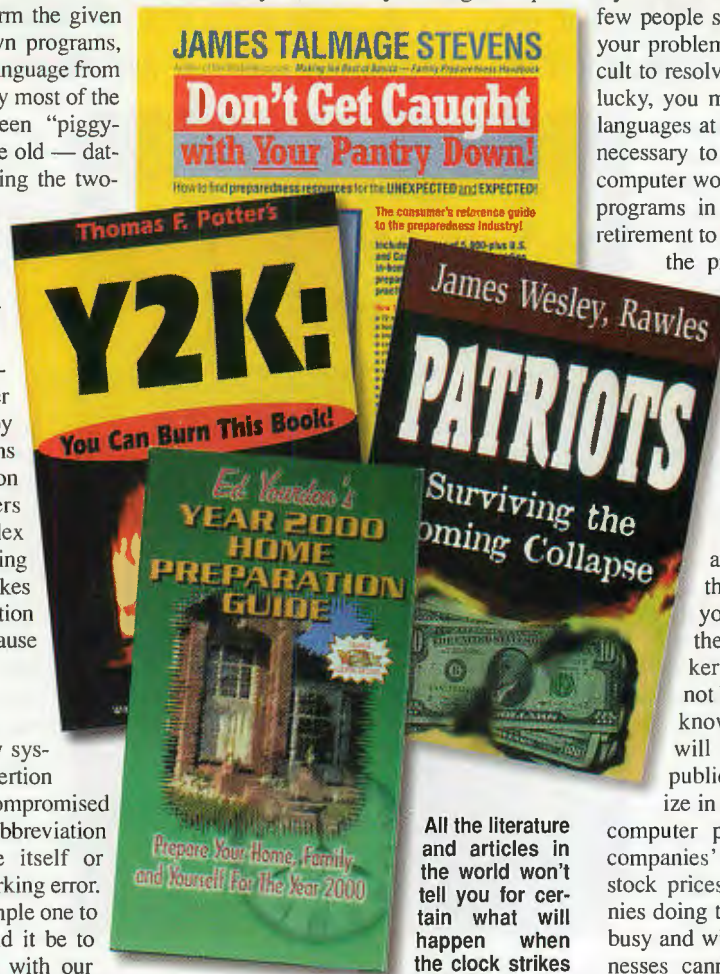
### Time Is Running Out

The task is simply too large, and time is running out. If you think I am an alarmist, I suggest you call a stockbroker. (Some of them, particularly the discount brokers, will talk to you even if you do not have an account with them.) If he knows his material well, the broker will be able to give you the name of publicly held companies that specialize in services related to the year-2000 computer problem. Ask him about these companies' revenue growth and how their stock prices have fared lately. The companies doing this type of work have been very busy and will continue to be. After all, businesses cannot operate without computers, and for those that exceed a certain size, there are government forms and payments that can only be made electronically. Thus, the companies that specialize in resolving the year-2000 problem are now working on the computer systems of companies that are trying to minimize its effect.

Unfortunately, there are many companies that still have their heads in the sand. After the year 2000, they will need people who specialize in the year 2000 problem to work on their computers. By then, however, the people who can deal with the problem will be overwhelmed by the demand for their services. As for the prices such services will command when this panic hits, I will leave it to the reader's imagination.

I truly hope that various government agencies and international corporations will be able to stop such a crash on the day that marks the beginning of the new millennium. If not, we face a number of potential problems. The first involves the immediate loss of records. At the very least, this would prevent ready access to the compromised records. The second involves the loss of long-term lack of access to the records. The third, and possibly the most dangerous, is the alteration of records, which could be caused by computer hackers.

*Dr. John Mrozek is a writer and physician in Colorado Springs, Colo. ☞*



All the literature and articles in the world won't tell you for certain what will happen when the clock strikes midnight, ushering in the year 2000. But books such as these give good advice on how to survive should the world fully or partially shut down. As one *SOF* reader says, preparing for the worst is like having a good homeowner's policy.

## The 1999 Soldier Of Fortune Convention in Las Vegas will feature several reputable vendors who can help you prepare for Y2K. They include:

Urban Survivors LLC  
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(505) 665-4497

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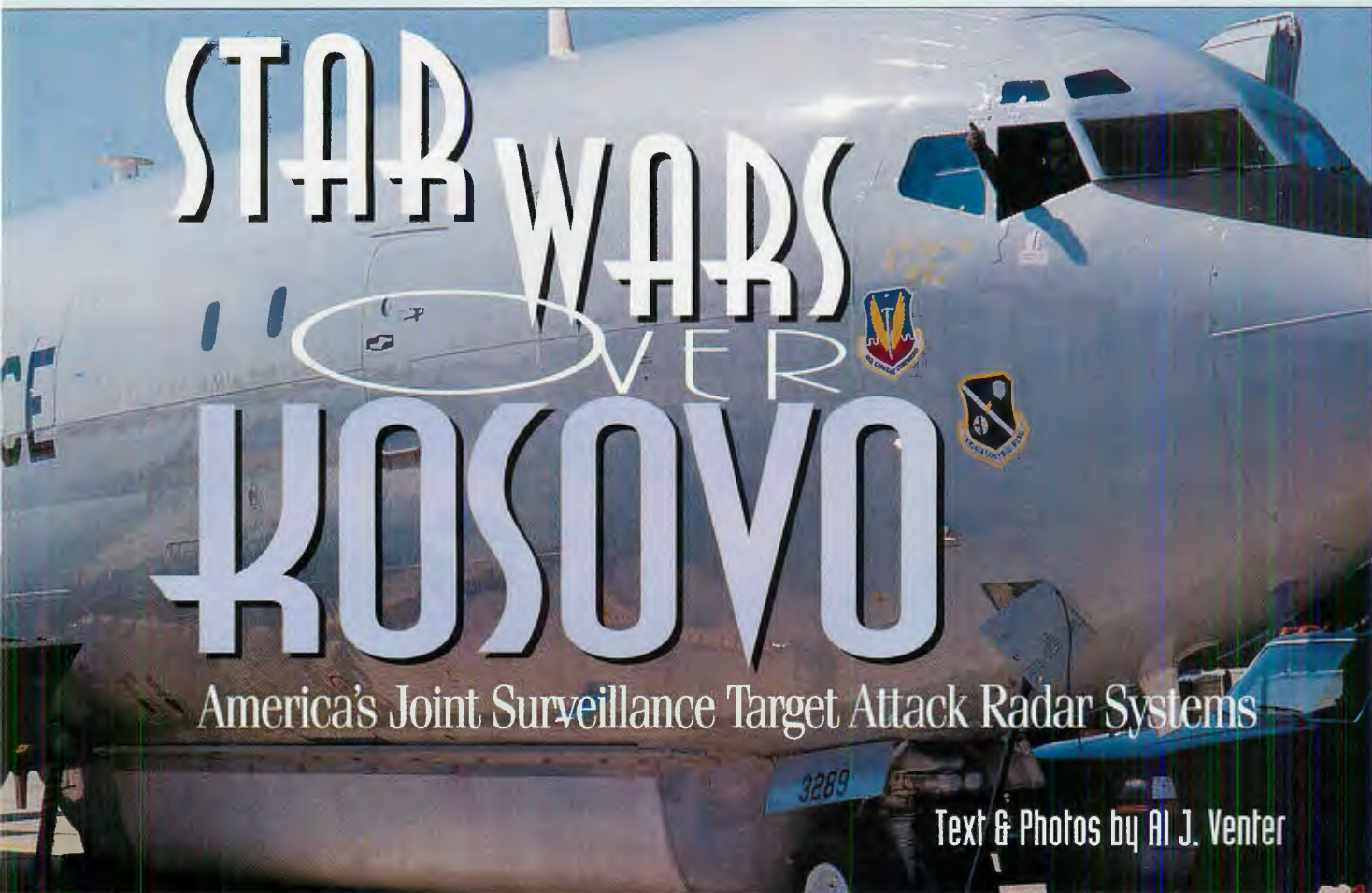
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## America's Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar Systems

Text & Photos by Al J. Venter

RHEIN-MAIN AIR BASE, GERMANY — One's first impressions of the Balkans — after arriving on-station off Kosovo — are provided by computers onboard one of the U.S. Air Force J-STARS air-to-ground surveillance aircraft. Once over the target area, surrealistic photo-like images appear almost simultaneously on the screens of the 18 workstations onboard. They show the entire disputed region, called up from the aircraft's multi-mode radar weapons system.

Suddenly, in the heart of Kosovo, a giant symmetrical natural amphitheater comes into view. This entire depression — about 80 km in diameter — is completely surrounded by mountains. Some of the peaks are still partly covered in ice even though it's already May. Just off-center, in the southeast quadrant, is Pristina, its lights blinking in the glimmer of a moonless night. From where we flew, the town seemed almost within touching distance.

The huge natural depression on the ground created a succession of irregular images. Scattered about on the screens were dozens of tiny blobs of color that depicted enemy assets: purple for vehicles and yellow for armor, and there were a lot of both. We could also see a ridge of high ground, running north to south, neatly dissecting the valley in two.

You know that business is for real when you're issued your Escape and Evasion kit shortly before the briefing. That and the fact that everybody else onboard is getting danger pay. If we were shot down, the officer warned, I would, along with the rest of the crew, be regarded as a prisoner of war.

Then came fingerprints. "Just in case," the Intel officer explained: "Might be the only way of identifying your body."

Before the requisite mug shots, front and side, I was asked to write down four "personal authentication statements" — specific details about my life with which only I was familiar. The rationale was that if we went down and, by some miracle, survived, they had to be sure that it was not an impostor who was being handed over.

None of it was reassuring, considering that we would be work-

ing in the vicinity of the Kosovo theater of operations. From the time that we reported to base operations to lift-off, it took the crew roughly three hours to prepare for the mission.

The only items they didn't give me were emergency radio procedures and the large military tea bag that B-52 bomber crews get: It spreads a green dye around you in the event of a crash landing in the ocean. That would have been nice, since our routing in and out of the Balkans was over the Adriatic. Also, the 20-minute in-flight refueling session about halfway through the 14-hour flight was also over water.

### A Fundamental Truth

One of the concepts that originally brought the Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar Systems (J-STARS) project to fruition was a fundamental truth about conflict: In any war, movement dictates options. That's as applicable today as it was with Napoleon's swift attack at Austerlitz. It was equally valid in Vietnam and in Operation Desert Storm. Thus, as they say, "victory usually goes to one who can maneuver."

The difference at the end of the millennium is that J-STARS provides those involved in Kosovo with the advantage of what one officer termed "having in hand the living dynamics of the battlefield and in real time."

In the same way that the E3 Sentry (AWACS) monitors all-weather surveillance, command, control and communications in the air, J-STARS is land-fixated. Operational procedures allow it to act in concert with ground-hugging AH-64 Longbow Apaches by digitally passing along targeting information. Thus, as we sat just off the battlefield and looked down through our onboard screens, we could see much of what was happening in a lot of Kosovo. Coordinated with a good mix of manned and unmanned assets, such operations will eventually have the potential for a truly seamless transition either in peacekeeping or in the sort of crisis management that the Allies now face in the Balkans.



Curiously, the Joint-STARS concept has been described by one American pundit as almost doing for modern warfare what the Internet has done for communications. He explained it this way:

The real-time display of movement on computer consoles onboard is truly revolutionary. It allows commanders in the air and on the ground to see well beyond the "other side of the hill." Given the acknowledged dependence of armies on wheels (or tracks) for essentials like mobility, heavy firepower, armored protection, supplies and engineering support, the ability of the system to detect, locate and target these vehicles in all weather provides a huge advantage that today's armed forces have yet to exploit to the limit. Ultimately, this machine will be involved in a totally different approach to warfare. It will eventually dictate how armies and air forces are deployed in combat and, significantly, even how these assets are equipped.

Onboard our aircraft over the Balkans, two U.S. Army technicians — including the deputy mission crew commander (DMCC) — were at the rear of the plane operating in conjunction with the rest of the onboard crew, other aircraft and a variety of ground stations. It was their job — together with those technicians manning 16 more work stations on the plane (and who make up the bulk of the 23-man crew) to provide intelligence and targeting information to the Combined Air Operations Center (COAC) in Italy.

Information requests, such as area searches and Synthetic Aperture Radar/Fixed Target Indicators images, are relayed through them. More requests for data might come from the Joint Analysis Center at Molesworth, in England, one of the primary downlink

points for Joint-STARS data. There is also a direct link with its airborne adjunct, the EC-130

### In Orbit

Once "in orbit" adjacent to Kosovo, our aircraft flew tight figure-eight circuits of classified length. As it was explained, if anything on the ground moves, the aircraft can detect, locate and support attacks against it. Because visibility is not a factor (nor is cloud cover), such operations can go on for a day or more at a stretch, though most missions last only half that duration.

In theory, long hours aloft should have been boring as hell. In truth, it was anything but. There was always something happening. On one of the earlier flights, the plane hadn't been on station an hour when the alarm sounded and the plane was thrown into an almost vertical dive. That left some crew who hadn't been strapped in clinging to the roof of the aircraft.

### "This Ain't No Game"

Unquestionably, there is a threat of enemy counter-action. The pilots make no secret of the fact that if they were suddenly to receive word of possible hostile fighter action, they would waste no time heading in the opposite direction. Consequently, each J-STARS has its own combat air patrol (CAP) — though numbers and types of fighter escorts are secret. Nor do crews fudge about the necessity for protection in a region where a MiG-21 could probably be within missile range within a couple of minutes of take-off.





(above) The 26-foot-long radar canoe, hanging below the fuselage, can be clearly seen on this converted Boeing 707 commercial jet. (inset) The sun rises with a J-STAR on station, monitoring developments on the ground in Kosovo.

As one of them told me, “No CAP, and we’re out of here. If that happens, we go off-station and hang about until those assets are in place. And if they still don’t appear, we go on home!” He added, “This ain’t no game, it’s a real fucking war!”

Then there is the possibility of the Yugoslavs using ground-to-air missiles. From what I saw on the consoles — and I sat in front of a variety of screens for some hours and had the entire gambit given to me in great detail — Kosovo is “thick on the ground with mobile SAM-6 batteries,” as one crewman asserted. Asked why these hadn’t been brought closer to the border areas (since the Serbians seem to be moving everything else around), there was no answer. Personally, I was more fearful of longer-range SAM-3s, which are also in the Serbian arsenal. Some SAM-3s have been deployed in the south.

Certainly, these issues have been raised often enough. Missile (and Triple A) threat, I was told, while not taken lightly, are invariably balanced against intelligence reports from ground observers and the fact that the orbit is always beyond maximum target range of the latest ground-to-air missiles that Belgrade acquired over the years from Moscow. Like everybody else, I was curious to know why Yugoslavia had never used its much-vaunted missile defensive system. Or could it possibly be that they are keeping them for later?

It was notable that during our flight we could see a lot of activity on the ground in two specific sectors of Kosovo. There were indications on the screens that the Serbs were very active in two areas adjoining the neighboring states of Albania and Macedonia: in the extreme south of Kosovo and in the southwest. Both regions had seen a lot of refugees in months past. On the face of it, consequently, there was every indication that the Yugoslav Army was preparing

for a ground invasion. In some places, close to the frontier, roads were cluttered with trucks and the distinctive yellow blobs of armor.

During the course of *SOF*’s visit, the U.S. Air Force lifted some of the security restrictions surrounding the ability of its long-range, air-to-ground surveillance system to locate, classify and track, virtually in any weather, on-line and in near real-time, a variety of enemy ground targets. Although the concept is old hat (a prototype, J-STARS test-bed was used to track, locate and target Iraqi divisions in the Gulf War — especially during the Battle of Al Khafj — and there were also the ARL and Mohawk systems that came before), very little about this long-range detection weapon has appeared in print.

By 20 February this year, two of the USAF’s four Joint-STARS (together with 200 personnel, out of a total of 1,000) had been deployed to Rhein-Main Air Base in Frankfurt, Germany. Requisitioned by General Welsey Clark, both planes — parked well away

from the others and protected by squads of armed guards — are part of the 12th Expeditionary Airborne Command and Control Squadron, assigned to the recently established 60th Air Expeditionary Wing. This combat assignment came as a third J-STARS was sent to Kadena, in Okinawa, Japan, to watch developments in North Korea.

The concept of the J-STARS system is basic. Operating from the safety of friendly airspace, the aircraft is able to peer almost 250 km across borders and do stand-off analyses of enemy ground assets. Each aircraft carries a phased-array, mechanically operated radar antenna housed in an elongated 8-meter pod under the forward fuselage area which provides the necessary data for pinpoint strikes by aircraft, missiles or artillery for fire support. There was no missing it. You walked past it when you boarded — and it obviously weighed some tons, because I could feel it thudding through the airframe when it shifted on its axis. But little else about it was disclosed.

I was told that J-STARS ground-tracking radar — in a single



eight-hour sortie — can search an estimated 600,000 square kilometers of terrain, though the officer warned that the aircraft had zero identification abilities. Other intelligence-gathering systems such as UAVs or possibly a Humint (human intelligence) source might be tasked to clarify the nature or threat status of a specific sighting.

### Attack Planning

Because it's an integral part of the U.S. Air Force's Air Combat Command (ACC), most details regarding operational and acquisition procedures onboard J-STARS aircraft remain classified. What did quickly become apparent was that just about everything pivots around the aircraft's Wide Area Surveillance and Moving Target Indicator (WAS/MTI) which are the aircraft's fundamental operating modes. By focusing on smaller areas (it can narrow down to 2.6 sq km), the radar image can be enhanced for increased resolution display. This is then used to define moving targets and provide combat units with accurate information for attack planning.

Covering a 150-km-square block, the images brought up on the aircraft's monitors can be split into eight grid areas which are electronically scanned in azimuth with a rapid revisit rate of seconds. Potential targets are always subjected to intensive repetitive sector searches. Basically, movement detection involves a Doppler shift system coupled to phased array radar. For example, the system is sensitive enough to differentiate (but not specifically identify) between wheeled and tracked vehicles, picking up one reading which is bounced off a moving tank or APC and another off its tracks. That combination creates the yellow blob on the screen.

What happens is that the MTI displays moving vehicles or armor as dots — or moving imagery SAR as still photos. Also, MTI can be displayed on a variety of backgrounds, from SARs to military maps to slope-shaded maps. Rudimentary analysis is provided by the plane's Synthetic Aperture Radar/Fixed Target Indicator (SAR/FTI), which gives area images almost comparable to the negative of a photo, complete with shadows off the surrounding mountains. In some areas the effect almost looks similar to 3-D.

By pushing out energy bursts in a succession of small grids (which, in turn, send back images), the system is able to clearly identify strategic features. These can include runways, buildings, aircraft on the ground or even a railway track. This, in the jargon, is what is called reflective energy and only now are some field commanders beginning to understand that full exploitation of these systems will require changing how armies and air forces are deployed and even how they are equipped.

Another revolutionary development — and one more pointed to the future — is that each set of images can be automatically stored in electronic target folders and immediately downloaded into the aircraft's database. Ground activity on a particular day might be called up on the aircraft's computers an hour, a month or even a year later to examine before-and-after anomalies. Thus, the system will immediately indicate whether there have been any new troop arrivals, or, possibly, fresh construction sites in the area of operations (AO). In some other quadrant, it might



(left) Because the flight lasted 14 hours, an in-flight refueling station was essential with a KC-135 refueler. During time J-STAR is aloft, it has its own fighter protection (right) to protect against hostile elements. Here a British Jaguar refuels in air during a mission.

pinpoint surreptitious repairs being made to a bridge that had earlier been bombed. In effect, SAR data maps contain the precise locations of critical non-moving targets such as bridges, secreted motor pools, harbors, factories, airports, buildings or camouflaged vehicles and armor.

### Too Complex?

Obviously anything new-fangled has its detractors. There are those who reckon that the system is too complex for the job, though this would be ignoring the basics of a remarkable system that 10 years ago was regarded as impossible. One authority, Lieutenant Colonel Collin Agee, deputy commander of the 525th Military Intelligence Brigade (Airborne), did ask in an article published in *Jane's IDR Extra* (May 1997), whether in J-STARS there was "Too Much Data, Too Little Intelligence," as his piece was headlined.

Clearly, the system is not foolproof. From my own observations, it sometimes appeared to be cumbersome. What has become progressively top-heavy in the Balkans (following a number of blunders that left innocents dead) is that instructions for any attack are very carefully assessed. Any attack needs to be filtered through half-a-dozen or more commands, having first been cleared from above — a time-consuming process. Also, targets must be agreed upon by all 19 NATO member states, which means that this is the first war being fought by committee. To many of those involved, it is quite simply an intolerable situation.

The sighting, for instance, of a tank or an enemy convoy on the ground, followed by a command to a fighter wing nearby to strike, might involve a 10-minute time lapse. It often takes longer. Mistakes have resulted in demands for independent verification, sometimes from several different sources and that takes more time. And, as so often happens, the target, by then, might have disappeared into a mountain hideaway.

During our own flight, the aircraft also seemed hampered by technology problems, which perhaps is not unexpected on an electronic platform with so much potential for glitches. Operational J-STARS missions have two electronics technicians onboard, but even then things happen. In an earlier flight, one of the workstations had to be shut down because of smoke fumes detected by a crew member. Another report spoke of aircraft being operated with poor satellite communications antennas and a faulty vapor-cycle cooling system, which made for a cold working environment.

Also, just keeping the aircraft in the air needs about 60 ground maintenance personnel and they swarmed all over us once we returned to Frankfurt, even though it was 0300. Ground crews have done well. In the first month of Kosovo operations, the unit missed only one flight. That was remarkable because both planes were operational every day.

In the Balkans war it is now accepted that it needs three such aircraft to provide around-the-clock coverage. Already, during my



(above) Monitoring ground movements in Kosovo at one of the onboard J-STAR computer work stations. (right) Enemy armor assets are depicted on the J-STAR screen as yellow dots. Vehicles are shown as purple dots.

own visit, a third J-STARS crew arrived in Frankfurt from Okinawa. They were exhausted, having come from the other side of the world, and were then still sent up after only their second day in Germany.

The role of the J-STARS unit in southern Europe, *SOF* was told, was threefold. In the Balkans war, J-STARS provides indications and warnings of friendly and enemy movement on the ground. Its surveillance system allows for intelligence assessment and, as a consequence, intensive preparation for future battlefield activities.

The system is uninhibited by cloud cover. A well-defined and powerful line-of-site communications system, once on-station (and in conjunction with E-3 Sentry AWACS elements) becomes a factor in the further deployment of other airborne elements of the Theater Air Control Systems (AETACS). These can include assets such as the Air Force RC-135V/W River Joint (Sigint), an occasional U-2, the Navy's EP3, the Royal Navy's Nimrod electronic intelligence gathering aircraft, France's RC12 surveillance system), Airborne Forward Air Control (ABFAC) as well as ABCCC along with ground TACS units.

### Rugged Terrain

Operating in a region as rugged and mountainous as the Balkans presents its own peculiar set of problems. Since the system is line-of-sight, the high, broken Balkan terrain tends to influence surveil-

lance coverage through screening and disrupting communications. In fact, shadows caused by the mountainous terrain can be clearly seen on the SARs. Obviously, this affects radar images as much as it does contact with clandestine special forces units on the ground. Also, the "shadow" effect tends to assist the adversary in concealing assets. The SAR and FTI capability used in conjunction with MTI and MTI-history displays, allows a limited post-attack assessment to be made by operators following a strike on hostile targets.

Significantly, major advanced technological elements of the program include software-intensive radar with several operating modes; the unique antenna with three receive ports; four high-speed processors capable of performing more than 600 million operations per second as well as associated software.

J-STARS reduce to a minimum the need for visual armed reconnaissance sorties to locate targets; it will probably never dispense with them altogether. The system works like this: While monitoring a number of frequencies simultaneously, J-STARS — in conjunction with CAOC, South Europe — spots a convoy of vehicles moving somewhere within Kosovo. First the specific area is electronically isolated. It is analyzed and then assessed by ground staff at CAOC as well as by J-STARS personnel.

Finally the potential target is referenced to previous electronic imagery in the onboard database and graded according to priority. If the subject is confirmed hostile by other theater assets, ABCCC might then order in a strike wing. Listening on the intercom there was comment from time to time about the volume of triple-A fire coming up from below.

Prior to leaving Frankfurt, pre-flight briefings include details of anything up to 20 priority targets. All had been pre-located possibly by a combination of UAVs, humint or the activity of infiltrated agents. Once in orbit, I was shown the target list.

All designations (which had been numbered according to the level of priority) were printed on a single sheet of paper. These were our first objectives. On each mission the Mission Crew Commander (MCC) would start at the top and work his way down the list pinpointing specific sites for strikes. His job was to coordinate all the airborne assets to achieve success.

As in any war, options and priorities can change. Now and again other targets — they had possibly come in only hours before — were also selected. All of it, together, made for a remarkably interesting sortie. Even after 14 hours I could have gone on, but by then all

of us were dehydrated.

The choice of using '60s-vintage Boeing 707s as vehicles for the E-8C J-STARS program is unusual. Several factors prevailed, including budget constraints. Another was safety. The 707-passenger jet still has the world's best commercial record. One of the officers involved disclosed that once the decision to proceed had been made, they scoured the world for them.

### Size Does Matter

Size, obviously, was a consideration. The 707 does have the advantage of allowing more operator work stations that are essential for onboard battle management. AWACS having fewer consoles are not as efficient, simply because more work stations influence the span of intelligence as well as the span of control. Both, in the words of a spokesman for the manufacturers of the system, "are key factors in J-STARS' ability to target large numbers of dynamic (moving) targets."

The contract to deliver — at a cost of \$225m per machine — was awarded to the Northrop Grumman Corporation. So far, four of these systems, which have an 11-hour range (22-hour flight with in-flight

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# Crash Course In Survival

by Wayne Laugesen

LTR's  
Underwater  
Survival Test



This year's Soldier Of Fortune Convention will offer simulated crashes in water (above) that will seem all-too-real for those who participate. "The cage is shaking and bubbles are everywhere and my eyes are bulging and I can't recognize anything," recalls one former participant. (left) Unlike a real plane crash, you'll likely be rescued if your survival training doesn't help during a simulated crash. Be assured however, your mind and body will instinctively react to this situation as though it were real.

**a** true soldier of fortune should be able to survive almost anything, including a helicopter, car or plane crash into water. And since you'll never know until you try it, the Soldier Of Fortune Convention is offering you just such an opportunity.

At this year's convention, Soldier Of Fortune will drop 100 free-falling Apache Helicopters from 3,000 feet into Lake Mead, so participants can test their skills at surviving impact and escaping from deep waters — NOT!

But we will do the next best thing, with ride-along simulations of aircraft and cars crashing into water, which might just save your life someday. LTR Training Systems, Inc., of Anchorage, will be offering its "crash" course called Underwater Air Escape, in which participants board simulators to be slammed at high speed into a swimming pool. During the 6-to-8-hour course, students receive academic preparation training and then spend 2-to-3 hours in a swimming pool learning to escape through doors, hatches and how to push out windows and doors that are under extreme water pressure. The program costs \$145 for SOF conventioners, and \$250 for the general public.

"The Aircraft Water Escape program is designed to prepare individuals for an over water emergency while traveling to and from offshore oil facilities," states LTR's curriculum overview for the course. "Emphasis is placed on techniques for escaping both stable and submerged airframes. Students learn and actively perform skills in a pool environment, guided by instructors, using two different portable airframe escape trainers as well as life rafts, lifejackets and equipment found in aviation emergencies."

At the convention, LTR will also offer its course "Facing Life & Death in Emergencies." This will be a dynamic pre-



(above) A plane crash involves the shortest survival situation possible: one breath, which must be taken just before smashing into water. Under water, three basic rules apply: 1. Don't panic; 2. Don't panic; and 3. Don't panic. "This is not a touchy-feely, get-in-touch-with-yourself course. It's not a big-cojones war game. This is as close as you hope you'll ever get to an airplane crash. It is adventurous. More than river rafting, rock climbing or any other packaged adventure you can buy." — *Adventure Travel* writer Mark Jenkins.



Humans can die after three minutes without air, three hours without clothes at 32 degrees Fahrenheit, three days without water, three weeks without food and three months without hope. At the SOF convention this year, LTR Training Systems, Inc., hopes to improve those odds for anyone tough enough for their training.

sentation on the many faces of fear and panic in emergency decision-making, regarding everything from deadly combat scenarios to being stuck on top of Mount Everest, to being trapped under frigid water in Antarctica.

Mark Jenkins, a writer for *Adventure Travel* magazine, went through a five-day course with LTR and learned how to survive anything, including: earthquakes, car wrecks, industrial accidents, shipwrecks, arctic exposure, terrorist attacks and hijackings. First, he learned three basic rules: Rule no. 1. Don't panic; rule no. 2. Don't panic; and rule no. 3. Don't panic.

Before his simulated aircraft crash, Jenkins was told he would have the shortest survival situation possible: "one breath."

"I unconsciously take a breath just before smashing into the water," Jenkins wrote. "Then I'm sinking, strapped in, turning upside down, water gushing up my nose and into my throat, but I can't cough, can't spit, can't open my mouth, so I start to panic, but I can't panic. I tell my brain, 'Don't panic!' but it already is, so I just hope my body ignores the signal."

"Sinking. No fight, no flight. The cage is shaking and bubbles are everywhere and my eyes are bulging and I can't recognize anything. Everything is wrong and I have to breathe, I have to breathe, and then the cage stops shaking. I'm shouting inside my head, trying to make myself heard above the pounding of my blood: 'Count to five! One,' but my mind is screaming 'Get out! Get out! ... two,' kick, punch, fight, anything, just move, move!" but I don't. I stay on the bottom of the pool strapped upside down, water running up my nose, choking, mute ... 'three,' but wait, it's working. I'm calming down, focusing ... 'four... five.'"

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# COLOMBIA BURNING

## The Dark Future of Narco-Wars

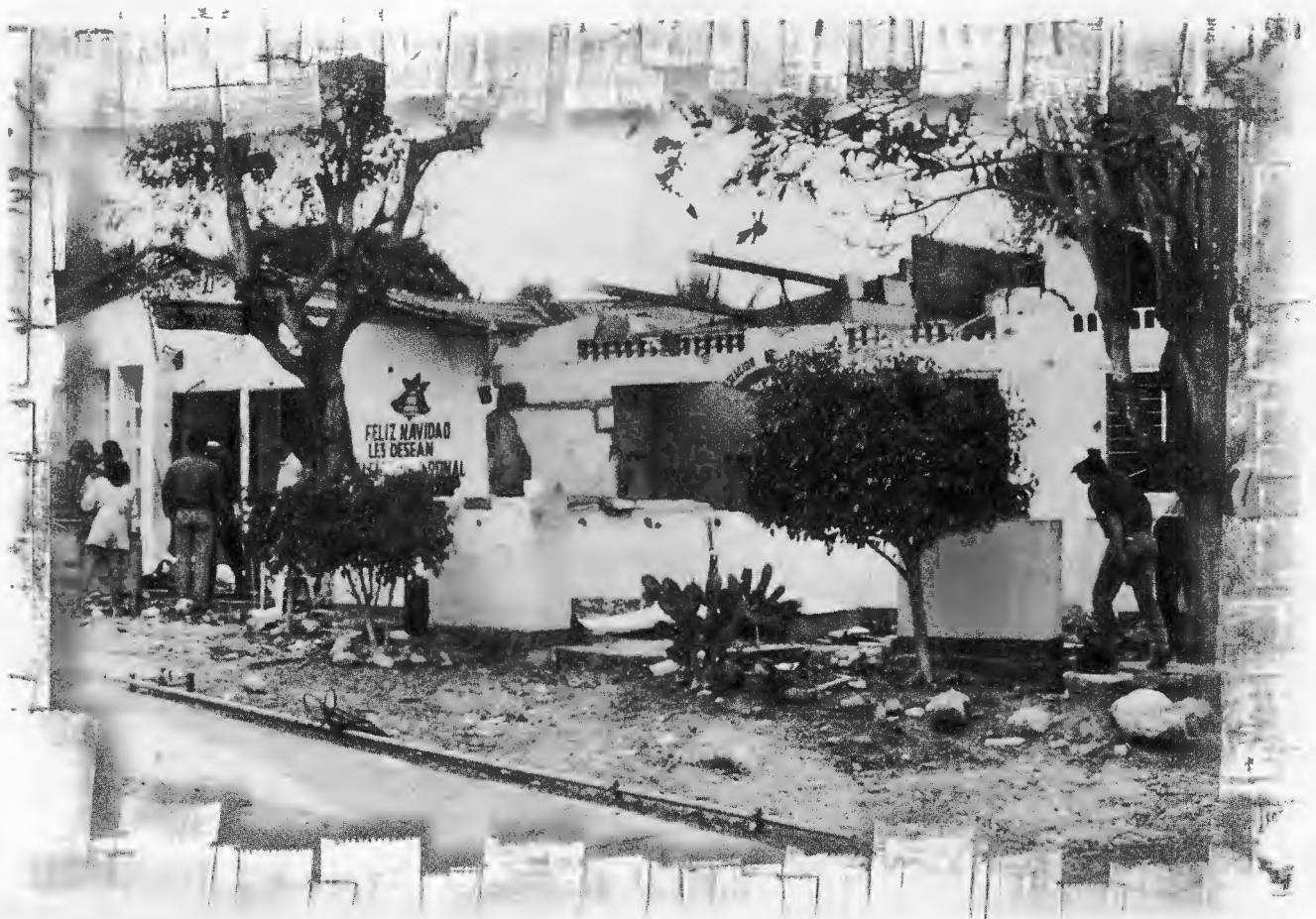
by Carson A. Nightwine, Jr.

Photos courtesy author

"In Colombia, the violence, destruction and death of 'Bloody August 1998' has come and gone. This offensive was a 'welcome aboard' to Colombia's new president, Andres Pastrana, who now hopes negotiations will stop the violence. Looking back, it has been nearly a year since the massive narcoguerrilla offensive that struck in each of the 32 provinces of Colombia, but there is more where that came from!" says drug and counter guerrilla warfare expert, Major Andy Messing, U.S. Army Special Forces (Ret.). "Colombia is at war ... and it's not going away, no matter how much is given away to the narcoguerrillas at the negotiating table. These narcoguerrillas are stronger than anyone in the U.S. government ever realized. With all the attention paid to the Balkans, I think the

Clinton administration has been asleep at the switch in our own backyard. This conflict is spreading to Panama, Venezuela, Peru and Ecuador and the drugs from Colombia end up in our neighborhoods," he continues. Major Messing, the executive director of the National Defense Council Foundation of Washington, D.C. has gone to the front lines in Colombia to assess the situation first hand. A veteran of Vietnam, El Salvador, Grenada, the Gulf War and Somalia, his critical reports and findings have attracted the interest of the U.S. Congress.

"In May and June of this year, the narcoguerrillas have flexed their muscles again by conducting over two dozen attacks, killing over 100 policemen and soldiers ... and its only going to



get worse," states Messing.

The current peace negotiations between the Pastrana government and the 18,000-strong narcoguerrilla Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (known by its Spanish initials: FARC) have not stopped the violence. To placate the FARC President Pastrana has granted them a DMZ the size of Indiana.

The FARC is the largest of two major rebel organizations operating in Colombia today. The Army of National Liberation (ELN) is the second largest narcoguerrilla force, numbering well over 6,000 fighters. "Both are communist inspired and narco-funded and our State Department has ignored that they've kidnapped nearly 30 U.S. citizens, brutally murdering seven in the past four years! This is worse than Beirut in the mid-eighties,," declares Colonel Robert W. Johnson II, USMC (Ret.) a world known authority on counterterrorism and low intensity conflict.

### Our Drug War

"The narcoguerrillas in Colombia are now attacking in force, and they obviously have the forces to do it. They are assaulting the general order and the rule of law in Colombia and the effects on the economy are obvious," says Jack Sweeney, a Latin-American policy analyst at the Heritage Foundation.

Because of this, the narcoguerrillas are producing more drugs to fund their 40-year old war. "As a direct result, in our country, the drug trade is growing ... just ask the agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration [DEA] stationed in Bogota or on our own cities' streets. This is our drug war too!" Messing asserts. According to the DEA, Colombia is the source of over 85% of the cocaine and 75% of the heroin captured in the United States today. "The narcoguerrillas increasingly grow, process and move drugs, while the Colombian security forces are tied up with this growing violence throughout their country," continues Sweeney, a former Marine with a background in counterinsurgency and international political policy.

The growing violence, by both the narcoguerrillas and paramilitaries have nearly paralyzed the year-old government of President Pastrana. In May, his justice minister and defense minister abruptly



(far left) A completely destroyed Colombian National Police station. FARC narcoguerrillas struck with such force and surprise in August 1998 that the government was in shock for months. Nearly 300 soldiers and policemen were killed, over 200 taken hostage in just a five-day period.

(top) Gen. Serrano and Col. Gallego, in the field on another Direct Action operation. "Leading from the front is Serrano's trademark ... that's why his men follow him," says Major Messing.

(above) Fingerprinting corpses is the only way to identify the bodies of Colombian National Policemen killed in the August 1998 offensive. Once wounded and out of ammunition, they surrendered, but were doused with gasoline and burned alive by FARC guerrillas.

(left) Dennis Hasters, Speaker of the U.S. House, visits a forward operating base of the Colombian National Police, where he congratulates an antinarcotics policeman.



resigned in the space of just two weeks. The resignations of 20 Colombian army generals followed. This happened after Pastrana announced that he gave FARC a DMZ indefinitely. "The FARC has a free ride. Pastrana's security forces are demoralized and clearly on the defensive. Colombia's future appears to be dark ... and very deadly," adds Major Messing. Most DEA experts share this gloomy assessment of Colombia's future.

### Looking Back

From 1995 to 1998, Colombia had been decertified by the Clinton administration's State Department for allegedly not fighting the drug trade. "But for allegedly not fighting the drug trade, they have paid a horrendous cost in flesh and blood, contends colonel Johnson. "Colombia, as a country, was decertified because of the drug-corruption in the presidency of Ernesto Samper." Those three years of decertification have helped to bring on this current

chaos, observes Messing.

Samper had taken over 6 million dollars in drug money from the Cali cartel in order to win the 1994 presidential election. Colombia suffered terribly without U.S. assistance, and by all accounts, today's situation appears to be a direct result.

The costs in this growing conflict are going up each year. According to senior diplomat Juan Orduz of the Colombian Embassy in Washington, D.C., "In 1998, nearly 30,000 Colombians were killed in Colombia's narcoguerrilla war." Included in that number are nearly 800 soldiers and policemen in just the past year. "President Pastrana is grabbing at straws to stop the violence. The peace process is very short sighted from the governments side, but the guerrillas are in the drug business for the long haul. They have no incentive to give up their money-making enterprise," declares Messing.

*Continued on page 74*

# omega PROVING ground

## Viet Cong M1911A1 7.62x25mm Conversion

Wars are won or lost because of logistics. Logistics is the procurement, distribution, maintenance and replacement of material and personnel during a required time frame. Within the area of military small arms it includes matching ammunition and weapons. Dropping crates of 7.62x51mm NATO ball ammo into a hot LZ with defenders armed only with M16s is clearly an example of screwed-up logistics

Poorly equipped insurgents must often depend to a considerable extent on captured weapons. Providing ammunition in the proper caliber for these arms can present a major problem in logistics as they are usually captured without a significant amount of ammo. Sometimes, the only way in which weapons can be utilized is to convert them to calibers for which plentiful supplies of ammunition exist, no matter how laborious the conversion may be.

During the war in Indochina, the Viet-Minh frequently converted captured French MAT49 submachine guns from 9mm Parabellum to the ComBloc 7.62x25mm cartridge with which they were supplied in substantial quantity by both the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China. Converting relatively low power pistol caliber submachine guns and pistols to another cartridge can be accomplished in crude, poorly equipped field workshops.

An interesting example of this type of modification is a .45 ACP M1911A1 pistol I have that was converted to caliber 7.62x25mm. When, or by whom, this was done we will never know for certain. It could have been the work of the Chinese during or after the Korean War or the Viet Cong during the Vietnam War. I suspect the latter as many of its features resemble those specimens known to have come from VC jungle workshops. While the workmanship is crude almost beyond belief, the conversion itself reflects an elaborate effort.

The 7.62x25mm and .45 ACP cartridges are quite different in geometry and performance. Undoubtedly a derivative of the 7.63x25mm (.30 Mouser) round, for which the C96 Mouser Broomhandle pistol (popular with the Bolsheviks) was chambered, the rimless, bottle-necked 7.62x25mm cartridge was adopted in 1930 for the Tokarev TT-30 and then TT-33 pistols. It's a high velocity round, coming out of the muzzle at 1,492 fps, and flat shooting, but its 85- to 90-grain FMJ projectile will over-penetrate, doing little damage unless it strikes a vital organ. Overall length of the loaded



Probable Viet Cong jungle workshop conversion of M1911A1 pistol to caliber 7.62x25mm. Shown with VC hand grenade.

round is 1.365 to 1.370 inches. The case length varies from 0.962 to 0.976 inches. The rim diameter is about 0.390 inches.

The performance of the .45 ACP ball round is well-known. Leaving the Government Model's muzzle at 855 fps, the 230-grain FMJ bullet will yaw about 5 or 6 degrees in either direction as it passes through human tissue with a total penetration of about 26 inches. Overall length of the loaded round is 1.260 to 1.265 inches. The case length varies from 0.894 to 0.903 inches. The rim diameter is about 0.470 inches.

The dimensional differences between these two cartridges is considerable and thus a conversion from .45 ACP to 7.62x25mm presents a significant challenge. However, throughout the Indochina wars, the Vietnamese demonstrated many times over an ingenuity that we never failed to underestimate. The conversion of this Remington Rand Inc. M1911A1 pistol (manufactured either

toward the end of 1944 or at the beginning of 1945) to 7.62x25mm exhibits so much intensive labor that it almost appears to be partially an act of defiance.

Nothing whatever came easy in this fascinating conversion. Both the front and rear of the frame's magazine well were substantially relieved by milling and grinding to accept a highly modified magazine. Welding material was crudely added to the inside surface of the frame's fixed ejector so that it would properly engage the smaller case diameter of the 7.62x25mm round. The sear spring was reduced in size at the bottom and re-shaped to accommodate the enlargement of the frame's magazine well. The U.S. Army Ordnance "crossed cannon" emblem and Ordnance Inspector's initials (F.J.A. for Lieutenant Colonel Frank J. Atwood), roll-marked on the right and left sides of the frame, respectively, were obliterated by grinding. Subsequent to this, the frame was polished to remove some of the more severe pitting and then salt blued directly over the original parkerized (phosphate) finish. The original issue plastic grip panels were replaced by crudely formed and cross-checked wood panels that are very typical of Viet Cong field workshop endeavors.

After its numerous alterations, the slide was provided with the same finish. However, prior to this the breech face was altered by grinding and then brass brazing a small steel insert onto its surface. The slot in the breech face for the ejector was also enlarged to accept the weld-modified ejector. The slide's ejection port was enlarged at the front end to provide clearance for the longer 7.62x25mm case. The extractor was reshaped and reannealed. The slide stop's axis pin exhibits evidence of having been welded back onto the lever. Cosmetically, the machine checkered front end of the

recoil spring plug was re-surfaced and very crudely rechecked by hand with a file.

Both the bore and chamber of the High Standard M1911A1 barrel were sleeved separately to caliber 7.62x25mm. The sleeves were both pinned and welded in place. The barrel's chamber end was brought back to the correct dimensions by grinding, filing and lathe work.

The conversion of the magazine was especially laborious. The magazine body itself was reshaped on a mandrel to accept the longer round and the resulting gap up the right side at the rear filled with copper alloy brazing. The magazine's integral bottom was removed during this alteration. The brazed surface was then ground and filed smooth. The magazine follower was made from a piece of galvanized scrap sheet metal. The floorplate is that of a Tokarev pistol, highly modified. There is sheet metal keeper between the floorplate and the follower spring.

Throughout, the pistol exhibits hard service and minimum maintenance. The left side of the slide is heavily pitted. All screws, without exception, have mutilated slots. The front and rear sights are badly dented as though the pistol was used as a hammer or club.

The final result would be disgusting to a user, but magnificent to a collector of Vietnam War militaria. Beauty is truly in the eye of the beholder. Does it work? The one I own is quite reliable, but several others I have examined and fired suffered from continual feed stoppages due to rounds stubbed on the feed ramp. I suspect that the altered magazines' lips were reshaped with incorrect feed angles. But still, jungle workshop conversions like this are fascinating, and now uncommon, relics from the wars in Southeast Asia.

— Peter G. Kokalis

# Ontario's Spec Plus Quartermaster

The new SP17 Quartermaster, part of Ontario Knife Company's Spec Plus line, might in an earlier time have been named the "Forager," as it is a military knife that is eminently suited for dressing game and other field tasks.

With a deep 6" drop-point blade of 3/16" carbon steel, the radius at the point is gradual enough to be a good skinner/dresser, and the depth and thickness make it a good chopper for its length, as well.

The blade is coated with powder epoxy, which provides corrosion resistance and as a bonus makes the knife easy to clean and hard to see. An associated phenomenon is that blades so coated are quieter on the draw and when doing chopping work, or ("You'll sleep with that tonight, soldier") dropped on a hard surface.

The leather washers in the grip of older GI knives have been up-graded with a handle overmolded of black Kraton. The angular shape with a pronounced belly, the circumferential grooves, and the texture give a solid and comfortable grip, which is important in an instrument meant for long periods of work, as opposed to five-minute sessions of desperate combat. Full-tang design ensures the handle will not loosen nor break. Molded into the handle is a cross-guard, ample to keep one's hand off the blade. A brass-lined lanyard hole is cast into the butt — handy for working over or under water.

Since the monicker "Quartermaster" implies use as a multi-purpose tool around the S-4 shop, we gave it a good workout on what we thought would be "quartermaster" duties: cutting bands on packing crates then pounding it under the lid and prying the lid off, cutting through fiberboard C-rat cartons, opening #10 cans — the usual creative abuse to which a snuffie is likely to put such a knife. We give it high marks, as it came through with no damage and

kept a good edge. The epoxy coating held up well even cutting the top out of tin cans. We cleaned it with solvent to remove automotive grease and then ran it through the dish washer. The manufacturer may or may not recommend such treatment but it held up fine.

Like all Ontario products we have tested, this is a very good knife — and as with everything in the Spec Plus line, a very good value for the money. Well-suited for all-around field use, the Quartermaster comes with a black Cordura-and-leather sheath.

For the Ontario dealer nearest you, contact: Ontario Knife Company, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 500, 26 Empire St., Franklinville, NY 14737; phone: 800-222-5233; fax: 716-676-5535.

— Don McLean



# Holographic Diffraction Sight For Law Enforcement and Military

Weapon sights using an illuminated reticle pattern, often a red dot, and mounted on the Colt M16/AR-15 series now prevail in both law enforcement and military circles. The U.S. Army purchased 80,000 Aimpoint Comp M electronic reflex sights in 1997 for their M16A2 M4 assault rifles. There is, in my opinion, a better alternative.

EOTech, Inc. (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 134010, Ann Arbor, MI 48113; phone: 734-994-1200, ext. 3661; fax: 734-741-8868; Email: vdonohue@hotmail.com) developed and now markets exclusively to law enforcement and military personnel and agencies, the amazing Holographic Diffraction Sight (HDS). The HDS features advanced technology previously encountered only on the heads-up displays of weapon targeting systems found in the cockpits of modern fighter aircraft.

Holography is the technique of producing visual images by means of wave-front reconstruction, especially by using lasers to record on a photographic plate or screen from which a three-dimensional image can be projected. A hologram, or holograph, is the pattern or image generated in this way. EOTech's revolutionary HDS uses a hologram of a reticle pattern recorded on a heads-up display window. When illuminated by laser (an acronym which stands for "Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation") light, the holographic image becomes visible at the target plane, where it remains in focus with the target and provides instant target acquisition.

EOTech, Inc., which was founded in the summer of 1995, is a subdivision of the Environmental Research Institute of Michigan (ERIM). ERIM, a non-profit R&D organization, is now 50 years old. For the first 25 years of its existence it was part of the University of Michigan. With 425 scientists on its staff and a support staff of 200-300, ERIM conducts core research and development for the U.S. Department of Defense, NASA, and the intelligence community (NSA and CIA). ERIM concentrates on image processing and sensor technology, and more recently, battle surveillance equipment.

ERIM is a think tank which develops and conducts feasibility studies, but does not manufacture equipment. Ninety percent of their work is classified. Holography was invented at ERIM in 1962 by Dr. Emmett Leith. The original Holographic Diffraction Sight was developed under contract with Wright Patterson Air Force base (the Air Force's R&D center) for deployment on helicopter gun ships in Vietnam and for anti-aircraft weaponry. At that time the unit cost approximately \$800 and had a 4x5-inch window, which made it unfeasible for small arms applications.

This holographic technology was shelved and then revived in 1994. An agreement was reached in 1996 with Bushnell for the commercial market. In 1998, EOTech introduced the archery equivalent of the HDS and they have recently entered the law enforcement and military arena. They have strong alliances with DefTech, Sage International, Bushmaster, Armalite, Heckler & Koch and General Dynamics (where it has been mounted on the GAU19 five-

barrel, .50 caliber Gatling gun). GG&G (Dept. SOF, 3602 East 42nd Stravenue, Tucson, AZ 85713; phone: 520-748-7167; fax: 520-748-7583; Email: gggaz@aol.com), which makes rear sights for the M16A2E4 and M4 flat top receivers that cowitness with the HDS, is an EOTech distributor.

Manufactured entirely in the United States, the EOTech HDS is a transmission-type hologram and thus projects what appears to be an illuminated reticle pattern directly on the target. Yet no forward light is actually projected. To me, the HDS's most important salient feature is the operator's ability to acquire the target without regard to a cheek weld or consistent alignment of the shooter's eye, the

sight's reticle pattern and the target. No matter how you move your head and eye about, the reticle pattern will always remain in exactly the same place on the target. This is an incredibly important phenomenon, especially when rapid and accurate target acquisition under stress becomes literally a matter of life and death during a gunfight.

Mud or other obstructions do not affect the operator's ability to effectively see the reticle pattern and engage targets, even if the display window is almost completely covered. The heads-up display window is 3/8-inch thick, with three panes of glass bonded together to form a shatter-proof laminate. The two outside panes have an antireflective coating. Reticle patterns can be changed in the field in less than 30 seconds with no more than a 2 to 3 MOA change in the point of impact. There is a wide range of interchangeable reticle patterns. The HDS sent to us for test and evaluation was equipped with the standard reticle which is a two-dimensional ring (65 MOA in diameter) with tick marks and a center 1 MOA dot. The exit aperture is 45 degrees. There is provision for attaching filters to obtain night-vision compatibility.

After adjustment of elevation and windage zero, you simply look through the sight assembly's window, place the reticle image on the target, and fire. The eye relief on the HDS is an incredible 1 inch to infinity. The elevation adjustments are in 1/2 MOA click increments and those for windage adjustments are in 1/4 MOA-click increments.

In a tactical environment the operator's peripheral vision is almost unlimited and up to 50% on each side of the target. That's because there is no tube, the reticle window remains close to the eye, and the large reticle pattern neither covers up or obscures the target. As no light is cast upon the target, there is no signature to compromise the operator's position. Glint screens are not necessary.

The HDS has 20 levels of brightness adjustment. When the sight is turned on, the brightness level is automatically set at the factory to level 15. The user can program the sight himself to turn on automatically at level 1 (minimum brightness setting) or level 20 (maximum brightness setting), but he must do so each time the sight is turned on or the sight will move back to the factory default setting. The HDS is also equipped with a battery check indicator.



There is also an auto shutdown mode and the unit will automatically shut itself off eight hours after the last push-button control has been pressed. The user can also program the HDS for a two-hour shutdown mode. The HDS is powered by two commonly available Type N 1.5-volt batteries. As the batteries run down the reticle brightness will remain at the set intensity and then shut down abruptly.

Options for two different mounting interfaces that do not require a tool are available. Although it is slotted, the battery cap screw can be removed by hand as well. A rugged, steel roll bar hood is also available. The HDS costs about \$350.

Recoil testing equipment at the EOTech plant simulates the recoil of the .454 Casull (3,500 Gs for 0.5 milliseconds). The first 22,000 HDS units produced were all cycled on this test bed.

The HDS can be mounted for cowitness with emergency iron sights. We attached the HDS to an M16A2, equipped with an upper receiver (from the Colt law enforcement AR-15A3 Tactical Carbine, #AR6721) that features a 16.1-inch heavy barrel (chrome-lined with 1:9-inch twist) and removable carrying handle. Attached directly to this flat top receiver's MIL-STD-1913 rail, a GG&G MAD (Multiple Aperture Device) BUIS (Back Up Iron Sight) was mounted to the rear of the HDS and, together with this upper receiver's GG&G folding front sight, zeroed at the range for co-witness with the HDS.

The MAD was originally developed to fulfill a request from Naval Surface Warfare for a back up iron sight that provided both a large and small aperture on the same plane and would thus be zeroed to the same point of impact. The MAD has four apertures, two of each size (so that rotating the aperture in either direction will bring the next size into view). The small aperture diameter is 0.073-inch and the large aperture is 0.199-inch in diameter. It uses the standard Colt windage knob and windage screw. One click of the windage knob provides approximately 0.48 MOA change when mounted on the M16A2E4 rifle and about 0.65 MOA on the M4 carbine.

The MAD mount body is manufactured from 6061 T6 aluminum, hard anodized per MilSpec. The stem and aperture disc are made from 4140 steel, black magnesium-phosphated per MilSpec. The MAD overhangs the rear of the receiver by 0.200-inch. This provides a lip so that the sight can be easily deployed even with a gloved hand. The unit locks in the up and down position with a positive detent. It sells for \$141.

Technology in these areas moves rapidly, but for now the hot ticket for the M16A2E4, M4 and AR-15A3 is without doubt the EOTech HDS together with the GG&G MAD BUIS. The HDS clearly outperforms the Aimpoint, Trijicon and C-More, with advanced technology and superior optical attributes.

— Peter G. Kokalis ✂

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## Star Wars Over Kosovo

Continued from page 61

refueling are routine) have been built. The J-STARS inventory will be increased to 14 aircraft with two more entering service this year. Foreign sales to friendly allied countries are now being mooted by Northrop Grumman, the manufacturers. Both Britain and Israel are in line.

The electronics onboard any one of these aircraft is formidable. It was stressed often that a single J-STARS platform has a greater computer capacity than all of the U.S. Air Force's 33 E-3 Sentry (AWACS) together.

The main computers onboard are 6 Mil Vax 866 mainframes, of which two are systems monitoring and one is a hot spare. Three more are general purpose computers, one of which handles local area network (LAN), another radar and one spare.

Each of the 18 operational work stations onboard is a Digital Equipment Corporation 133Mhz processor with 512 MBs of RAM and two 1 GB hard drives. A point made by one of the boffins was that they are prohibited from switching the system on while flying over developed areas because the power generated activates every electronic garage door as far distant as the horizon.

Operating in the crowded air lanes over southern Europe presented other problems. Balkan airspace was sometimes so crowded

that it left some of us out in the cold.

Our own flight had a narrow miss (from a fighter) while on-station. The following day a J-STARS en route to the Adriatic avoided a head-on collision with a passenger jet by going into a dive that drew four or five Gs. Charlie Cole of *Newsweek* was aboard and he estimated that the pilot had about 2.4 seconds to make the right move. Apparently wrong data had been relayed to the oncoming plane by Milan's ATC. Later that same day, Cole told me, there was another near miss in cloudy conditions. Two escort fighters had to take avoiding action within a couple hundred meters of his aircraft.

Several observers stated that allied aircraft might still prove to be a greater threat in the air than anything that the Yugoslav Air Force can throw at them. There has been a lot of comment about the ability of military ATC personnel to control the heavy air traffic over Kosovo and not all of it is favorable. Obviously, with hundreds of aircraft operational at any one time (including 100 USAF KC-10 and KC-135 tankers in an average 24-hour period), the Balkans has become something of an ATC nightmare.

It is so bad at times that J-STARS crews have frequently been ordered to operate under the "see and avoid" rule. When visual rules cannot be kept, the aircraft must pull out of its orbit. Missions have already been cut short because of it.

## Rapid Getaways

As for the threat of enemy fighters, which, anywhere else might make for problems, the U.S. Air Force has never, as of press time, funded a self-protection suite for J-STARS. Consequently, as has already happened onboard, if a threat becomes apparent, a rapid getaway in the opposite direction is still the crew's primary defense.

For the time being, CAPs remain in place because of the threat of Yugoslav MiG-21s. NATO intelligence is aware that a number of these (and other) jets are stationed at Pristina, only two or three minutes flying time from where our J-STARS was flying. All are secreted deep in mountainside hangers that have so far made attack impossible. This threat, consequently, persists.

It was interesting that on the one occasion that Belgrade attempted to put Yugoslav Air Force MiGs in the air — possibly in a bid to stymie J-STARS activity — it took F-16s only 39 seconds to shoot three of them down.

*Al J. Venter is a senior SOF foreign correspondent.* ✕

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than one hour, and can sustain ourselves for a few days in the field," Lt. Merida said.

"What makes a good TRAP team member?" we asked.

"A good TRAP team member knows the mission and the SOP," Lt. Merida told us. "He's a Marine through and through."

No one at the War College, NATO, SHAPE, EUCOM, USAREUR or the Pentagon still thinks about waging war against endless columns of Warsaw Pact armor plowing through the Fulda Gap on their way to Frankfurt. Instead, today's mission planning is more likely to focus in on how to control low-level ethnic conflicts in places with little or no strategic importance to Washington or Western Europe, before they explode into genocide or spill across borders. Crowd control, refugee return and disarming guerrilla armies have become just as important to planners as have smart weapons.

So it came as no surprise to anyone aboard the *Kearsarge* or to *SOF* when it was announced that the MEU had been tasked with providing a company-sized security detail at a U.S.-sponsored refugee camp in Albania.

"I wouldn't term this a test case," said Lieutenant Chris Harbour, second-in-command of BLT 3/8 Lima Company. We were standing at the edge of an endless salt marsh which acted as the natural boundary of Camp Hope, a massive refugee facility along the Albanian coast, 75 miles south of the capital Tirana.

"This is a new world, with new missions for the Marine Corps," Lt. Harbour continued. "I think we're capable of being successful here."

### Hot Tempers In Hell

Everyone *SOF* spoke with in Lima Company knew it was a mission that could — in the blink of an eye — easily put egg on any commander's face and possibly end a career.

"Just imagine what it's going to be like here in July," one Marine told *SOF* at Lima Company's base camp, about 1/4 mile from Camp Hope. "It's going to be hot as hell, and those tents are going to be hot and peoples' tempers are going to be short."

"I wouldn't go on record with my thoughts," a gunnery sergeant told *SOF*, "but I'm worried about what folks like yourself are going to do with us when we end up using CS [gas] on some rioting refugees. You'll [the media] tear us a new asshole."

Other Marines at Camp Hope voiced similar opinions. "It doesn't make me comfortable," one Marine told *SOF*. "We've got riot shields, batons, tear gas. But this is the reality of today's world. I'd much rather face a conventional enemy, but I've been tasked with this mission. So be it."

*Mark Milstein is a senior SOF foreign correspondent based in Budapest.* ☒

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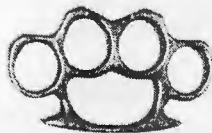
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## Shoot Fast, Hit To Win

Continued from page 47

Tom Yost of Smith & Wesson was second in this division, with a score of 219.01 Tom was shooting the brand new S&W 945, S&W's own variation of the Government Model, in a Safariland Model 560 holster. IDPA President Bill Wilson was third, with a score of 220.00. Not surprisingly, as always, Bill used a Wilson .45 and holster.

One of the strongest elements in favor of IDPA's growth as a sport is that even on a national match level, a competitor can do well with a stock pistol and an inexpensive concealed carry holster. Ernie Langdon's win in Stock Service Pistol, for instance, was accomplished using an over-the-counter Beretta and a rig he could wear to the mall with his family. That's what IDPA is all about.

Saturday night after the shooting was done, there was an outdoor poolside barbeque at the host hotel in Jefferson City. Each night of the match there was a hospitality room with food and drink, and many of the shooters spent a lot of time getting to know their contemporaries from all over the United States. This camaraderie and the open exchange of ideas and tips is a big part of IDPA events. For many, the social aspects of these gatherings are almost as important as the shooting, giving us a chance to visit with friends and associates from around the country and make new friends, as well.

Sunday morning found everyone in a hotel conference room, eagerly awaiting the match results. Elegant engraved silver plates were awarded to the winners and several places in each division and classification. Each division is further broken down by classification, including Master, Expert, Sharpshooter, and Marksman, determined by the scores achieved on a standard classification course of fire. This further separates shooters into skill levels within each equipment division, allowing less experienced competitors to win trophies by shooting against other shooters of similar skill, rather than pitting newcomers against the old masters. This is just another aspect of making this sport more accessible and more enjoyable for the average defensive shooter.

*This year's championships, 18 stages/180 rounds minimum, will be held at Lake Cormorant, MS, from 1-3 Oct. Match headquarters hotel is Sam's Town Hotel Casino & Resort; phone: 1-800-456-0711. Contact Match Director Tom Givens at IDPA, P.O. Box 639, Berryville, AR 72616-0639; or by email: info@idpa.com; also, check their website: www.idpa.com.*

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## Crash Course In Survival

Continued from page 63

Once in control, Jenkins goes on to describe, he is able to go through the escape procedures he'd been taught in the classroom, including opening a door against immense water pressure.

"This is not one of those adventure vacations you find in the travel section of the *Sunday Times*," Jenkins explains. "This is not an adult-education class. This is not a touchy-feely, get-in-touch-with-yourself course. It's not a big-cajones war game. This is as close as you hope you'll ever get to an airplane crash. It is adventurous. More than river rafting, rock climbing or any other packaged adventure you can buy."

Specifically, the course content includes: helicopter and fixed wing impact forces; pre-crash positioning and restraint systems; drowning and resuscitation; autonomic stress reactions in water emergencies; history of escape training; aircraft familiarization; obstacles for escaping submerged air frames; stable escape scenarios and life-raft deployment; the seven steps for escaping submerged airframes and methods of training; actions on the surface, such as signaling for rescue and dealing with rescue forces; survival swimming, life raft boarding and survival and life support equipment; and aircraft simulator training.

With which LTR trainers hope all students will attain specific objectives, including: to become familiar with pre-positioning aircraft life-support equipment and its function and use; to identify body positions and restraint systems that minimize impact trauma; to identify the 10 obstacles to escaping a submerged airframe; to memorize the seven steps for escaping a submerged airframe; to become familiar with rescue and survival techniques that increase an individual's survival and recovery after escape from an airframe.

"We have been quite successful during our 14 years of business due to the fact that we are not armchair adventurers," says Brian K. Horner, president of LTR Training Systems, Inc.

Horner and his partner, Bruce Birchell, are both former U.S. Air Force global survival instructors. They begin every program with the "rule of threes," in which they tell how quickly people die in disasters. Humans die, they say, "after three minutes without air, three hours without clothes at 32 degrees Fahrenheit, three days without water, three weeks without food and three months without hope."

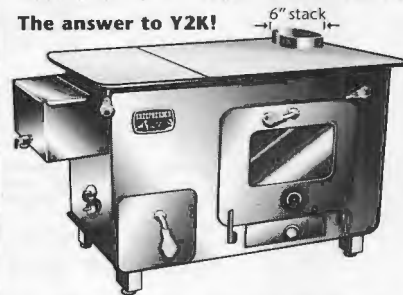
Such victims, however, are mere mortals — not soldiers of fortune who've learned to beat the odds of all that might kill them, with the aid of such fine courses as those taught by LTR.

Wayne Laugesen is assistant editor of SOF. ✕

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Nearly 10,000 soldiers and national policemen (the size of a U.S. Army division) have been killed or wounded during this decade alone. This is a very high price being paid for not fighting narcotics, originating from these guerrilla movements. "U.S. diplomats in Washington, D.C. and Bogota have repeatedly denied the narcoguerrilla nexus, and for that reason, our trusted allies have suffered," observes Messing.

The credit for holding the line must go to General Rosso Jose Serrano, director general of the Colombian national police. He is widely acclaimed for destroying the bloody Medellin and Cali cartels. He is America's "favorite policeman" says Attorney general Janet Reno. President Clinton's Drug Czar, General Barry McCaffrey said, "U.S. citizens feel enormous gratitude for his efforts."

Retired DEA boss, Thomas Constantine calls him the "foremost hero in the world-wide war on drugs." Serrano's handpicked commander of the anti-narcotics police (DANTI), Colonel Leonardo Gallego, enjoys the same sterling reputation with our DEA. "Unfortunately, the Clinton administration has not matched its words of praise with tangible support for these heroic drug fighters, who are dying every day." Asserts a high ranking DEA special agent now serving in Bogota, "The bottom line here is that General Serrano has had over 4,000 of his cops killed in action during the past nine years. He's been fighting our war on drugs," says Messing.

Due to the work of the National Defense Council Foundation and Major Messing's testimony before Congress, it has caused numerous U.S. Congressmen to visit Colombia to observe the situation firsthand. Among those are Dennis Hastert, the new speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, Dan Burton, (R-Ind.), ben Gilman (R-NY), John Mica (R-Fla.), Mark Souder (R-Ind.), and Bob Barr (R-Ga.). They have led the effort to get assistance to security forces combating the narcoguerrillas and the paramilitaries.

*Contributing correspondent Nightwine is the former World-Wide Conflict Analyst for the National Defense Council Foundation, of Washington, D.C. He returned from war-torn Colombia to file this series of reports.*

*The narcoguerrilla story in Colombia will be continued next month, covering the growing threat and steps to counter it. For more information on the projects, studies and fact-finding missions of the National Defense Council Foundation, (NDCF) write: NDCF, (Dept. SOF), 1220 King St, Alexandria, VA 22314; or Email: ndcf@erols.com. ✉*

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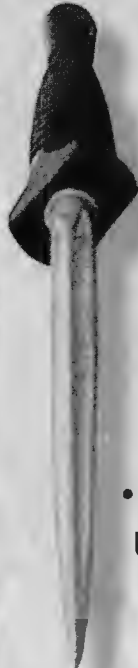
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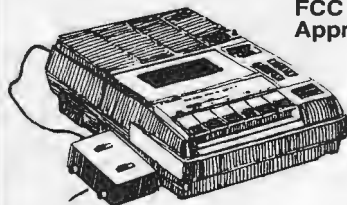
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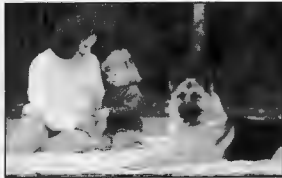
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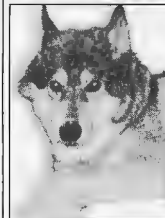
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## Kosovo: A Pyrrhic Victory

**W**ait a military minute. We spend 4 billion bucks, risk our Green Berets' and jet jockeys' lives, and the Ruskies do an end run and march into Kosovo before us?

They get the parades, flowers and cheers that were beamed by television around the world — and we pick up the tab.

This just doesn't add up. But come to think of it, nothing in the "war that wasn't a war" makes much sense.

Let's review the deal. President Clinton does a peace dance with indicted war criminal Slobodan Milosevic, a guy he called Hitler, in which Milosevic stays the main man. Kosovo still belongs to him. Serb soldiers, the ones who drove out the refugees, will be at the border welcoming them back home.

Humm? Things have changed since President Truman; when Hitler put a bullet in his brain rather than face Harry's stern music. If he'd played war under Clinton rules, he'd have been allowed to give Ike the keys to Berlin while the Nazi army passed in review and then quietly retired to a sunny dictator-friendly South American state.

Had I submitted an outline of how the operation went down as a proposal to a book editor, I'd have gotten the Big R — rejection — with a note saying "We don't do air power humor" or "Catch 22's already been written" or "Sorry, your imagination's in overdrive. No military operation could have been this bad."

But that won't be the spin coming out of the White House and the Pentagon until Hillary grabs the headlines by kicking off her pre-2008 presidential election campaign with her go at the Senate.

The veteran Clinton spin team — which flimflammed Monica into a stalker, Paula into trailer-park trash, and labeled Bill's womanizing and the selling of secrets to China as dirty tricks by right-wing extremists — will ram a hype hose down the nation's throat and turn the water all the way up.

"The war that wasn't a war" will be spun into a great victory, a combination of our Revolutionary War, V-J Day and Desert Storm.

But when our flyers and soldiers and sailors start leaking to the press, you'll see a triumph it was not. The conflict was not only badly bungled, it was the military mismatch of history.

It was like a wrestling match between Little Orphan Annie and Jesse Ventura — the little redheaded kid being Serbia and Jesse being a muscle-bound NATO.

Annie weighed in with a fourth-rate 1960s army, backed by 10



*Col. David Hackworth, (Ret.) also writes a syndicated weekly column titled "Defending America." "Hack" doesn't pull any punches and many liberal rags won't carry his writing. If your local paper falls into that category, call the editor and let him know you'd like to see "Defending America" on the Op-Ed page. It's syndicated by King Features, 235 E. 45th St., New York, NY 10017.*

million people from a primarily agricultural state the size of Ohio whose economy pumps out less dough than Coney Island on a rainy day. Jesse hit the scales with the most powerful military machine in the history of the world, 800 million supporters hailing from 19 mostly rich industrialized countries.

After 78 rounds, Annie is still standing and singing "Tomorrow! Tomorrow! I love ya tomorrow!" while Jesse, who has had to spend too much energy preventing his 19 supporters from stabbing him in the back, never got in a decisive hit.

When Serbia left Kosovo, its forces going out looked as good as NATO's military machine did coming in. The bombed and blasted Serb Army vehicles and soldiers were parade-ground sharp. Their trucks and tanks were clean and well-maintained, and their soldiers' gear, uniforms and haircuts looked ready for a tough first sergeant's inspection. No one looked battle-rattled or had that vacant 1,000-yard stare that comes from a few too many nearby hits.

After all those bombs and missiles and all of NATO's glowing reports about battle damage inflicted on the non-white-flag-waving Serbian Army, 11 MiG fighters rose from an air base in Kosovo on the day the peace deal was final. They wagged their perfect, unruffled wings and headed north. After such a pummeling, how could

11 jet fighters, almost more than Great Britain used in the war, remain unscathed?

Eventually, the analysts will tell us the final score. But one thing for sure is that the Cold War is back and Russia again has a bunch of missiles pointed our way.

Their politicians say they didn't authorize the stealth maneuver to parade in Kosovo, which means the generals — the guys who control the nuclear-tipped missiles — are really in charge.

Sleep well. Enjoy the "victory" while it lasts.

[Http://www.hackworth.com](http://www.hackworth.com) is the address of David Hackworth's home page.

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